

Incapacitated by Education:
The Role of Education in the Fall of Mohammed Reza Shah

By

Adam Marcy
The University of Kansas, 2010

Submitted to the Department of Global and
International Studies and the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Kansas in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts.

Dr. Rose L. Greaves
Chairperson

Dr. Hal Wert

Dr. Robert Baumann

Dr. Eric Hanley

Date Defended: 12/13/2010

The Thesis Committee for Adam Marcy
certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Incapacitated by Education:
The Role of Education in the Fall of Mohammed Reza Shah

Chairperson: Dr. Rose L. Greaves

Date approved: 12/13/2010

Abstract:

The Iranian revolution of 1979 was a cataclysmic event that forever changed the course of history. While the events that preceded the overthrow of Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi have been studied at great length, there is one aspect in particular that has been ignored, education. This paper seeks to examine the adverse effects that the problems within the educational sector had on the fall of Mohammed Reza. Although he invested an enormous amount of time and money into creating a strong educational system for his people, he encountered problems that ultimately contributed to his demise. It was these both these problems and their effects that helped make Iran ripe for revolution from 1977 to 1979. This paper will seek to examine the advances made, shortcomings, and the problems that resulted as a result of Mohammed Reza's desire to educate his people. While his intentions were good, the advancements that he made in the educational sector adversely affected his reign and contributed to his fall from power.

Table of Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
Section	
1) The Pahlavi Dynasty	
a) Reza Shah Pahlavi	11
b) Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi	16
c) The Azerbaijan Crisis	18
d) The Military, the United States, and the Founding of the SAVAK	25
e) The Shah and the Clerics	33
2) Land Reform and the Restructuring of Education	
a) Land Reform	37
b) Restructuring of Educational System to Solidify Hold on Power	42
c) The Literacy Corps	45
d) Countryside to City: A Movement that Plagued Mohammed Reza	54
3) Education Financing and Problems within the System	
a) Financial Trouble Contributes to the Shah's Fall	57
b) Budgetary Concerns: Inhibiting the Shah's Ability to Thrive	60
c) Overcrowding and Anger	62
4) Consequences of Educational Problems	
a) Increased Number of Students	65
b) Limited Number of Seats Available Angers Students	67
c) Effects of Middle Class Growth	69
d) The Misuse of the SAVAK	71
e) Anger Among the Students	73
f) Failure to Reform and the Fall	76
CONCLUSION	78
APPENDIX A	83
APPENDIX B	87
APPENDIX C	88
APPENDIX D	89

APPENDIX E	90
BIBLIOGRAPHY	91

Introduction

The vast and rich history of Persia dates back over 2500 years. With the first recorded history of the country initiated by the Achaemenian Empire, Persia has endured many power struggles, as well as significant advancements and achievements¹. While many countries throughout the Middle East have undergone immense changes in their history, such as Egypt, Persia continues to maintain much of her ancient heritage through her conservative nature. As a result, the Persians take great pride in their capacity to have maintained both a great and unified state, through their ability to be an innovative country when necessary. The Persians continue to desire to be a powerful nation within the realm of the global arena².

Extending roughly 1400 miles from the southeast to the northwest and about 875 miles from the south to the north, Persia consists of some 628,000 square miles³ and is a country of striking diversity. Situated between the Middle East and the Far East, Persia has a rich tradition of trade and prosperity. It was during the Hellenistic period that the country's early towns were established and built by Greek architects. Because of expansive mountain chains and extensive deserts, the major cities of Persia are located on the outer edge of the country's borders, aside from the cultural center of Isfahan, where the fertile land and bountiful water supply make the area habitable. As a result of her location, Persia became extremely critical in the 19th century to countries such as Britain and Russia, because of her position as a gateway to India, Britain's most important overseas possession, and because of the sharing of a border with the Russian

¹ Ministry of Information. *Iran* (Tehran, Iran, 1971).

² Richard N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia: The Arabs In The East* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975).

³ Ann K.S. Lambton, *The Persian Land Reform 1962-1966* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

state⁴. According to Arthur Millspaugh, a former U.S. economic advisor to the Persian government, Persia possesses distinct characteristics that distinguish it from other Middle Eastern countries: “While Persia, geographically, forms a part of the Middle Eastern region, it does not wholly belong to the Middle Eastern community. As a race or a nationality, the Persians do not assimilate with other Middle Eastern people; and while most are Moslems, they are set somewhat apart by sectarian distinctions”⁵. Another difference that sets the Persians apart from their Arab neighbors is that 89% of Persia’s population are Shia Muslims, while the majority of the Arab countries are Sunni Muslims⁶. Further, Persia is situated to the south of the Caspian Sea, to the northwest of the Persian Gulf and to the north of the Arabian Sea, which provides access to the Indian Ocean. Given the nature of her location, Persia became a country of great interest to foreign powers, and continues to remain so to this day.

⁴ William S. Haas, *Iran* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946).

⁵ Arthur C. Millspaugh, *Americans In Persia* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1946), 6.

⁶ A. William Samii, “The Nation and Its Minorities: Ethnicity, Unity and State Policy in Iran,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 20, no. 1&2 (2000): 128-138.



(Present day map of Iran: courtesy iranmap.com)

Iran's heritage began with the establishment of the Achaemenid Empire whose people are credited with creating a model of tolerance and universal law. The infusion of the Muslim religion into Persian heritage did not occur until the end of the Sasanian state (224-651). It was after the Sasanians fell from power that the Arabs were able to conquer Persia and bring the religion of Islam into the country:

In the same year that saw the coronation of Yazdegerd III. – the beginning of 633 – the first Arab squadrons made their entry into Persian territory. After several encounters there ensued (637) the battle of Kadisiya (Qadisiya, Cadesia) where the fate of the Sassanian Empire was decided....The fall of the empire sealed the fate of the religion. The Moslems officially tolerated the Zoroastrian creed....But little by little it vanished

from Iran⁷.

According to one Iranian army commander, who was himself defeated by the Arabs at Qadisiya, the Arab victory was not perceived as a positive for the Persian people:

They'll set the *minbar* (pulpit) level with the throne,
And name their children Omar and Osman.
Then will our heavy labors come to ruin.
Oh, from this height a long descent begins.
You'll see no throne or court or diadem;
The stars will smile upon the Arab host.
And after many days a time will come
When one unworthy wears the royal robes.
.
Then men will break their compact with the truth.
And crookedness and lies will be held dear⁸.

The overrun Persians believed that the Arabs would destroy Persian heritage and lead them into years of decline, ultimately resulting in the end of the Persian Empire. Despite the fact that the Persians were now Muslims and Arabic dominated both their language and culture, the Persians refused to let their heritage die. To ensure that this did not occur, the Persians were determined to revive their eloquent poetry in Farsi and keep the Persian national epic alive⁹. This new ideological view and religion that the Persians were forced to accept, were modified to incorporate their own Persian heritage, which did not conform to the customs the Arabs and Bedouins had brought with them.

⁷ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. Eleventh Edition, 1910-1911 Vol. 21, 224.

⁸ Jerome W. Clinton, *The Tragedy of Sohrab and Rostam: from the Persian National Epic, The Shahname of Abol-Qasem Ferdowsi* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1987), xvii.

⁹ *Ibid.*

Following a brief interlude of both Turkish and Mongolian invasions on the Persian state in the 12th and 13th centuries, Persia returned to imperial greatness with the establishment of the Safavid dynasty (1501-1722) in the 16th century¹⁰. It was at this time that the Safavids established Persia as a nation state with delineated borders and established Shi'ism as the national religion¹¹. During the reign of Shah Abbas I, the Persians saw a significant growth in cultural nationalism taking pride in their country's heritage. To illustrate this point, the Persian carpets, tilework, as well as other arts and crafts that came out of Isfahan, were presented to the rest of the world with tremendous pride. The achievements that were attained under the Safavid dynasty would come to an end when the country was overrun by the Sunni Afghans in 1722.

Out of the chaos which ensued following the Afghan takeover, the Turcoman, Nadir Shah, took control of Persia and ruled until his death in 1747. Following Nadir Shah's death, a prolonged civil war ended with the establishment of the Qajar dynasty (1796-1925)¹². Further, it is important to note, that from 1906 to 1979, Iran was to be governed by a constitutional monarchy, where the Shah "should act only as head of state and have no political involvement. But this concept had never been put into practice"¹³. While the Qajar dynasty enjoyed a long reign, their power quickly ended when Reza Shah (1925-1941) led a coup d'état to overthrow the Qajar's in the mid-1920's¹⁴. Thus began the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979) that enacted many of the advancements in an effort at modernization. This brought Iran

¹⁰ Richard N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia*.

¹¹ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Qajar Persia* (London, England: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1987).

¹² Richard N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia*.

¹³ Minou Reeves, *Behind the Peacock Throne* (London, England: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1986), 51.

¹⁴ Richard N. Frye, *The Golden Age of Persia*.

to the forefront of the international scene. The successes of the Pahlavi dynasty altered Persian history.

While the Pahlavi dynasty remained intact for 54 years (with a brief interlude from 1951-1953)¹⁵, they were ultimately ousted from power by a group of Islamic extremists. This fanatical brand of Islam, espoused by the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, brought about the Islamic Republic of Iran. The rise of Islamic extremism played a decisive role in the fall of the Shah (meaning king), in 1979. An important factor in Mohammed Reza's failure to remain on the Peacock throne was his inability to relate to the urban middle class. This was greatly influenced by the migration of the peasants to the cities of Iran. As a result, education played a substantial role in the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1979.

It is important to establish that while the primary actors in this paper are Reza Shah, Mohammed Reza Shah, Mohammed Mossedegh, and the Ayatollah Khomeini, there are also a number of key terms that are important for the reader to understand. The Majlis, the Persian version of a parliament, was created in 1905, through a *firman*, or a decree, by Shah Muzzafar ed-Din¹⁶. The Majlis was comprised of "an Assembly of delegates elected by the Princes, the Doctors of Divinity (ulema), the Qajar family, the nobles and notables, the landowners, the merchants and guilds'...set up in Tehran to consider 'important affairs of the State and

¹⁵ From 1951-1953 Mohammed Reza was forced to leave the country as Mohammed Mossedegh had gained the support of the Majlis in his attempt to nationalize the Iranian oil industry. Despite the fact that Mohammed Reza was not in control of the Iranian government, he was in constant contact with the United States and Britain, as both countries were concerned with Mossedegh's nationalist agenda. During this time, Iran was suffering from limited oil revenue, resulting in the economic conditions of the country to deteriorate. The United States and Britain ultimately decided to overthrow Mossedegh in what came to be known as Operation Ajax, led by Kermit Roosevelt. For more information on Mossedegh's rule and Operation Ajax, consult Kermit Roosevelt's *Countercoup* and Sepehr Zabih's *The Mossedegh Era*.

¹⁶ Con Coughlin, *Khomeini's Ghost: The Iranian Revolution and the Rise of Militant Islam* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009).

Empire”¹⁷. Essentially, the Majlis was established to ensure that the Shah did not wield all of the power within the government. While the establishment of the Majlis was intended to curb the Shah’s power, this did not often happen. At times, the Shah did not allow for the determinations of the Majlis to interfere with his decision-making process. This was routinely evident during the reign of Mohammed Reza Shah because of the growing influence of the clerics.

The name Peacock throne is a reoccurring term which appears throughout the paper. This term refers to the monarchical throne of the Persian royal family. During the rule of Nadir Shah, he and his men often conducted raids into India that resulted in their returning to Persia with copious amounts of booty. It was during a 1739 raid that the Peacock throne was brought to Persia. According to E. Alexander Powell, the Peacock throne is “that jeweled chair of state, once the property of the Grand Mogul, which was valued at thirty millions of dollars when it stood in the Diwan-i-Am in Dehli. It was carried off to Tehran in 1739 by Nadir Shah, the Persian conqueror”¹⁸. To this day, it remains in Iran.

¹⁷ Ibid., 49.

¹⁸ E. Alexander Powell, *By Camel and Car To The Peacock Throne* (New York, NY: The Century Co., 1923), 267.



(Photo of the Peacock Throne of Iran: Courtesy forums.altnews.com.au)

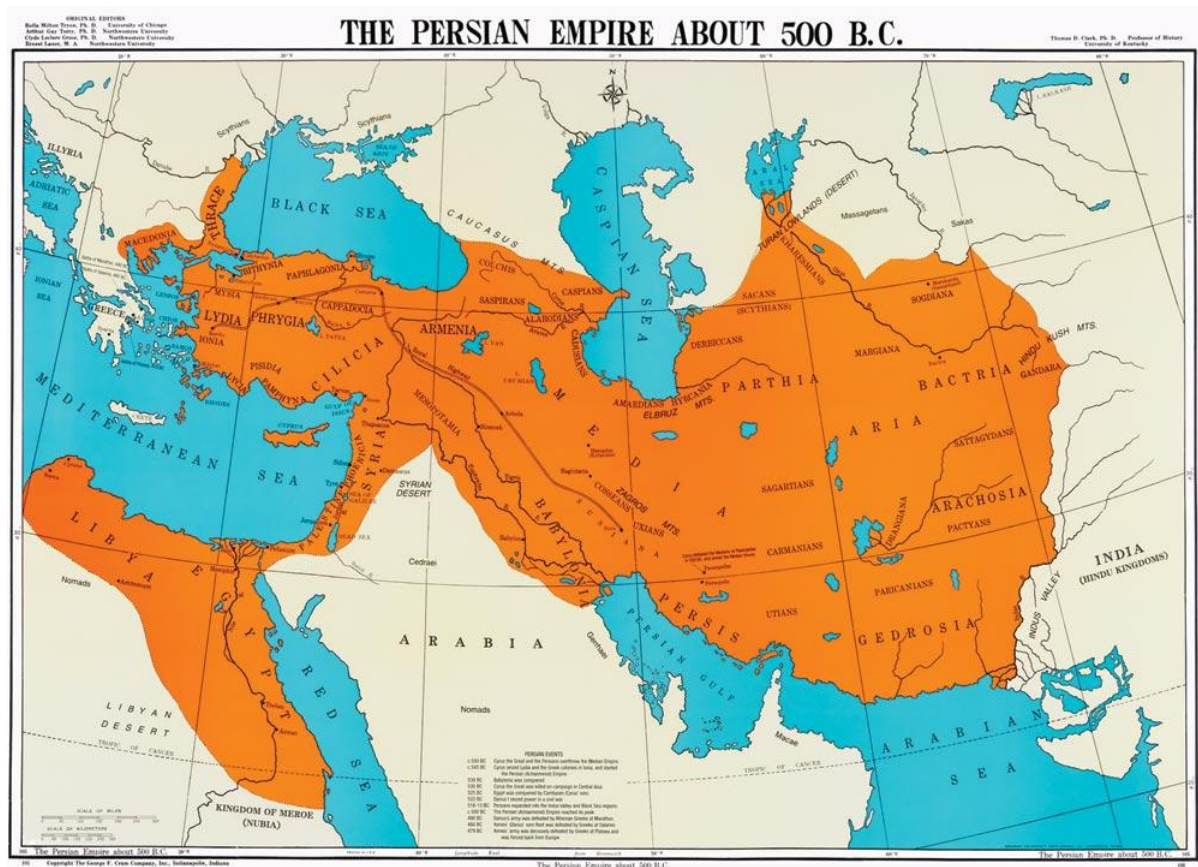
Also, it is important for the reader to understand that the two terms Iran and Persia are interchangeable. The name Persia comes from the Greek word Persis, or Parsa, as the Indo-Europeans settling in the Persian Gulf area called themselves. The importance of the Persian name harkens back to the glory days of the Persian Empire whose territory comprised much more land than that of modern day Iran, the name given to the country in 1935 by Reza Shah¹⁹. Reza Shah's decision to rename the country was attributed to his desire to establish a break from the country's past and to support both pride and national unity²⁰. Today, the country of Iran is named the Islamic Republic of Iran. The addition of the terms Islamic and Republic were added by Khomeini following his ascension to power in 1979.

Throughout this paper, many different names of individuals and key terms will be encountered. It is important for the reader to understand that many of the same names or

¹⁹ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran: Everything You Need to Know, From Persia to The Islamic Republic, From Cyrus to Ahmadinejad* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillian, 2009).

²⁰ Donald N. Wilber, *Iran Past and Present: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).

words within the Arabic language are spelled differently, but pronounced the same. For instance, the name Mohammed may also appear as Muhammed, Mohammad, or Muhammad. As a result, it is imperative that the reader understand that if certain names appear to look differently than they may have elsewhere in the paper, that this is not an error. I will clearly identify an individual who I am introducing into the paper if they have not previously appeared.



(Map of the Persian Empire in 500 B.C., courtesy: www.worldmapsonline.com)

In order to understand why Mohammed Reza fell from power, it is essential to understand some historical background and key events that took place under his reign. Therefore, I have devoted the first section of this paper to discussing the rule of his father, Reza

Shah, and the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty. The second section of the paper will discuss some of the reasons behind Mohammed Reza's fall. The third section will focus on the land reform program and the re-structuring of education, as these two elements played a significant role in the end of the Pahlavi dynasty. Education was something that both Mohammed Reza and his father took seriously. They believed that it was imperative for the overall success of Persia. Finally, the fourth section of the paper will focus on how the problems with the educational system negatively impacted Iranian society and contributed to Mohammed Reza's downfall. I will establish a causal link between the changes within the educational system that were enacted by Mohammed Reza and the negative impact that these new policies had on the urban middle class. The crux of this paper will evaluate the negative ramifications that arose out of Mohammed Reza's unrelenting desire to impact his country in a positive way through education. While Mohammed Reza ultimately wanted what was best for his people, as time elapsed, this became more difficult as certain policies went awry, adversaries came to the forefront, and his use of the SAVAK²¹ "(from the initials in Persian for the Organization for State Security and Information)"²² to restore order when needed. It was these circumstances that forced the Shah to abdicate the throne on January 16, 1979²³.

Despite all of Mohammed Reza's hard work, he had lost the support of his people, which was the crucial element that had allowed him to remain on the Peacock throne. The continued rise and success of the clerical establishment, under the direction of Khomeini, and their ability to

²¹ The SAVAK was created due to the belief that the communist Tudeh Party had infiltrated the Shah's army. As a result, many officers with ties to the Tudeh Party were executed. In an attempt to eradicate dissent, the SAVAK was created in 1957. For more information on the creation of the SAVAK, consult Parvin Merat Amini's "A Single Party State in Iran, 1975-1978: The Rastakhiz Party – the Final Attempt by the Shah to Consolidate his Political Base" *Middle Eastern Studies* 38, No. 1, January 2002, 131-168.

²² Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History* (New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1980), 156.

²³ Ibid.

garner the support of an increasing number of disgruntled Iranians adversely affected Mohammed Reza's reign, and exacerbated the tension that the people felt toward the monarchy.

The Pahlavi Dynasty

Reza Shah Pahlavi

The first leader of the Pahlavi dynasty was Reza Shah who was born in 1878 and established the dynasty in 1925. This began a period of extensive Westernization²⁴. Born in Alasht, Persia, to Colonel Abbas Ali Khan and Nush Afarin Khanum, Reza Shah's mother raised him with the assistance of her brother, following the sudden death of Reza's father just eight months after his birth. Following her husband's death, Nush took Reza to Tehran, where her family resided. Upon arriving in the capital city, both Reza's mother and uncle sought out a more suitable living condition for the boy. They found this in the home of Amir Tuman Kazim Khan of the Persian army. Nush knew that her son would greatly benefit from living with Amir Khan and that he would live a life of wealth and prestige that would better prepare him for his future²⁵.

Reza Shah's military career began at the age of 15 when his uncle enrolled him in the Cossack Brigade²⁶, which was comprised of infantry and a field artillery unit responsible for guarding the ruler of Persia and foreign dignitaries. The Cossack Brigade was established during

²⁴ Firuz Kazemzadeh, "Ideological Crisis in Iran," in Walter Z. Laqueur (Ed.), *The Middle East In Transition*, ed. Walter Z. Laqueur (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc, 1958).

²⁵ Donald N. Wilber, *Riza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran* (Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1975).

²⁶ For more information on the Cossack Brigade, see Firuz Kazemzadeh, "The Origin and Early Development of the Persian Cossack Brigade." *American Slavic and East European Review* 15, No. 3 (October 1956): 351-363.

the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah under the auspices of Tsar Alexander II and the Russian government. The Cossacks came to be known as an entity that was considered superior to the Persian army on the battlefield, in training, through use of equipment, discipline, and bravery. Rising quickly through the Cossack ranks, after only ten years of service, Reza had already become a sergeant major²⁷. Much of his success was attributed to his determination to succeed, his intelligence, and his competence. Despite the fact that all of these qualities were obtained under the patronage of Russian commanders, Reza refused to allow his views to become influenced by his foreign tutelage. By 1921, "his personality, devious and inscrutable, was fully formed and bore the mark of ruthless ambition, sustained by a harsh, inflexible will"²⁸. As Reza Shah continued to show that he possessed the skills of both an effective soldier and leader, he was regarded as a fighter of tremendous bravery and courage by his Russian instructors.

As both the influence and military fortitude of Reza Shah became more evident, he was asked to play a more substantial role in Persian politics. Major-General Sir Edmund Ironside of the British Army placed Reza Shah, who had previously commanded the Tabriz *atryad*, in charge of the Persian Cossack Brigade. Given the significant interest in Persia by the British government, as a strategic element in Britain's defense of India, the British government continued to support a military presence within Persia. In an attempt to assist the current Qajar Shah of Iran and to better suit the Persian defense, Ironside needed a leader who had both the capability and strength to assist the British government in the defense of Persia. As a

²⁷ Donald N. Wilber, *Riza Shah Pahlavi*.

²⁸ Gavin R.G. Hambly, "The Pahlavi Autocracy: Riza Shah, 1921-1941." in *Cambridge History of Iran*, Volume 7, ed. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 219.

result, Ironside called upon Reza Shah to command the Cossack Brigade. Ironside's appointment provided Reza Shah with the necessary tools to launch a bloodless coup d'état on February 21, 1921²⁹, five days prior to the Irano-Soviet Treaty of Friendship being signed in Moscow³⁰.

Even though Reza Khan had vowed to support the Qajar Shah, he ultimately garnered enough support to force Ahmed Shah's removal from power³¹. As put by a contemporary:

Since the dramatic *coup d'état* of Riza Khan, a burly and aggressive fighter from one of the northern provinces, who in a few short years climbed from a private in the ranks to commander-in-chief, minister of war, and virtual dictator of Persia...upon the debut of Riza Khan the morale and discipline of the army underwent a change almost overnight. Realizing from the outset that his retention of power, if not his very life, depended upon the efficiency and loyalty of the army, he set about welding and tempering and pounding it into a dependable weapon. His first step in this direction consisted in the abrupt dismissal of all the foreign officers and military advisers, and the appointment of Persians most of whom had received European military instruction in their stead..."I have no objection to the other branches of the Government having foreign advisers...They need them. But there will be no foreign advisers in the army"³².

The enormous power that Reza Khan had amassed in such a short time earned him the support of the army, which would later prove crucial. Despite the fact that he was pushed to resign from his position of prime minister in 1924, he was able to continue to play an integral role within the government. Though he no longer held a formal title, the continued influence that Reza Khan exerted over the military remained significant. This military support provided him with the means to situate himself as the next leader of Persia. As a result, following the

²⁹ Dennis Wright, *The English Amongst the Persians: During the Qajar Period 1787-1921* (London, Heinemann, 1977).

³⁰ Donald N. Wilber, *Iran: Past and Present* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958).

³¹ Donald N. Wilber, *Iran: Past and Present*.

³² E. Alexander Powell, *By Camel and Car To The Peacock Throne*, 257-259.

decision by the Majlis to abolish the Qajar dynasty in October 1925, Reza Khan was presented as the king of Persia on December 6, 1925³³. At this time, Reza Shah assumed the name “Pahlavi,” for his regime, which “identified himself with the ancient Persian tradition. He and his son Muhammad Reza built the image of the regime on Iranian monarchical glories from the time of Cyrus the Great”³⁴. This event marked the beginning of the Pahlavi dynasty.

As a military man, Reza Shah desired to strengthen the Iranian army. During his reign as the Shah of Iran, Reza’s army grew in power and prestige. Prior to his reign, the Iranian army lacked a significant amount of troops. Under Reza Khan’s rule, he made it a priority of his to ensure that his country had the means to defend itself by nearly doubling the size of the army, to 90,000 soldiers under his rule³⁵. Reza Shah’s ability to increase the strength of the army and rule Persia with an iron-fist allowed him to remain in power until he was ousted by the British and Russians in World War II.

Reza Shah was determined to control the fate of his country. He no longer saw it acceptable for Iran to be viewed as a country dictated by foreign influence. Rather, he wanted one that could stand on its own:

Reza Shah felt more keenly than any of his compatriots the tragic contrast between Iran’s glorious past and her present impotent state, and was resolved to rouse the country from her lethargy and to foster national unity and pride. Iran was to throw off all foreign intervention and influence and to win full independence and the respect of other nations. She was to be industrialized, and her social and economic institutions reformed, along Western lines³⁶.

³³ Gholam Reza Afkhami, *The Life and Times of the Shah* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009).

³⁴ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran*, 103-104.

³⁵ Lewis V. Thomas and Richard N. Frye, *The United States and Turkey and Iran* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951).

³⁶ Donald N. Wilber, *Iran: Past and Present*, 97-98.

From the beginning, Reza Shah was determined to reign in the provinces and over the tribes and social groups within Iran. Establishing a firm order and control over the central government was crucial and necessary for Reza Shah if he was going to succeed at the modernization program through which he proposed to strengthen his country, via Western technology³⁷. It was during the 1920's and 1930's, through his motto of "one country, one nation", that Reza Shah brought about a period of forced migration and resettlement as a means to curb the strength of the tribal chieftains who posed a significant threat to his rule. His goal of a homogenous urban society was viewed as an imperative element to creating a modern Iranian citizen, a change that he believed was necessary for his people to modernize. Reza Shah hoped that through this creation, his nation-state would become a viable entity³⁸.

Despite his short tenure as the Shah of Iran, Reza Shah accomplished many objectives. However, his declaration of neutrality in World War II, given his close relations with the Germans as Germany's ascension as his country's number one trading partner. It was also Reza Shah's hatred for communism and fear that it would spread throughout his country³⁹ that drew him toward the Germans. By 1941, the percent of foreign trade that Iran conducted with the Germans had escalated to between 45.5 per cent and 48 per cent⁴⁰. However, this was not the only reason Reza Khan decided to remain a neutral party in the war. According to Sir Reader Bullard, the British Minister in Iran, the Persians were partially afraid of the power of the

³⁷ John DeNovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East: 1900-1939* (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1963).

³⁸ Touraj Atabaki, *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran* (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000).

³⁹ Donald N. Wilber, *Iran: Past and Present*.

⁴⁰ Touraj Atabaki, *Azerbaijan*, 64.

German machine, and also respected their ability to take over, countries swiftly and with calculation⁴¹. The stoic, militaristic Reza Shah wanted to make Iran a world power. However, his desire to do so, and his unwillingness to side with the Allies adversely affected him.



(Reza Shah Pahlavi, founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty: www.iranchamber.com).

Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi

Despite the power that Reza Khan amassed, his reign would come to a close more quickly than it began, following the onset of World War II. Reza Shah was ultimately forced to abdicate the throne following an invasion by the Allied forces (Britain and Russia) into Iran in 1941. The British and Soviets were determined to gain exclusive control over the Trans-Iranian Railway, as it was the most effective means of getting supplies into the Soviet Union. Knowing that Reza Shah would not provide them with unlimited access to the railway, they forced Reza Shah to abdicate the throne, and accepted his son as the new leader of Iran. It was not until

⁴¹ Sir Reader Bullard, *The Camels Must Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961).

after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that Iran turned to the United States⁴² as “the Shah...believed that Iran must align herself with the United States in order to contain the Soviet danger to her independence and territorial integrity, as well as to grow strong and become modern enough so that eventually she could recover her independence from Washington as well”⁴³. As a result, Reza Khan’s first born son, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was placed on the throne at the age of 21. Young and inexperienced, Mohammed Reza was forced to deal with the Allies as World War II came to a close. While his father’s reign was a dictatorship, Mohammed Reza aspired to rule Iran with a democratic government. Although this was not something that he could achieve overnight, given the occupation by foreign powers, it would have to come gradually⁴⁴.

Given the state of the country when Mohammed Reza became ruler, one of the first problems that he was compelled to face was the fate of Azerbaijan. Occupied by Soviet forces, this area was of extreme importance to Iran given the vast oil fields in Baku in Soviet Azerbaijan. As a result, Mohammed Reza was determined to oppose permanent Soviet occupation. Therefore, Mohammed Reza turned to the British and the Americans for assistance. With the assistance of the Allies, sans Russia, the Shah was determined to show the world that the fate and prosperity of his country was of vital importance to him.

⁴² William E. Griffith, “Iran’s Foreign Policy in the Pahlavi Era,” in *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978).

⁴³ Ibid., 372.

⁴⁴ George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948: A Study in Big-Power Rivalry* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1949).



(Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi after his ascension to the throne: ivmp.wordpress.com)

Background of the Azerbaijan Crisis

The Persians held onto the territory of Azerbaijan until 1828 when part of it was conquered by the Russians. Following the successful Russian invasion, a portion of Azerbaijan remained in Soviet hands, including Baku. Within the next three years, Azerbaijan was once again threatened, but this time by a former member of the Majlis, Sheik Mohammed Khiabani. Through his Public Commission, Khiabani was able to ascertain a significant number of political followers and several armed volunteers. In April 1920, Khiabani's men revolted and successfully drove Persian officials out of Tabriz. By the end of the same month, through a manifesto published by the Public Commission, Khiabani promised to maintain order and employ the verbiage of the 1906 constitution throughout Persia. However, at the end of May 1920, the Russians sent their Caspian fleet to Enzeli, a Persian harbor. With the assistance of the local communists and the aid of the forces of guerilla leader Kuchik Khan, the Russians established the Soviet Republic of Gilan. In response to Kuchik Khan's desire to work with the

Soviets, Khiabani chastised Kuchik and condemned Soviet involvement in the territory. This led to Lenin calling for a Soviet withdrawal from Gilan, which was followed by Persian troops arriving in Tabriz in September 1921 where they executed Khiabani⁴⁵. This set the stage for the Azerbaijani crisis that resulted following World War II. The Soviets did not respect Iran's territorial integrity.

Following Reza Shah's confirmation as the Shah of Iran in 1925, he immediately began to turn his attention to the communist threat. Understanding that the communists were involved in the uprising in Gilan, Reza Shah knew that he had to act decisively to inhibit communists from threatening Persian unity. By suppressing communist organizations and quieting their press, Reza Shah was able to force the communists underground. Thus, the communists moved north and established their headquarters in Baku⁴⁶. Reza Shah kept the communists at bay until 1941.

So that the trans-Iranian railway would be used to the advantage of the Allies rather than the Germans, the Allies forced the abdication of Reza Shah in 1941. Without any experience in the governmental policies, Mohammed Reza Shah was thrust into a position that required a strong will. Signed in 1942, the Tri-Partite Treaty⁴⁷ (see Appendix A) was one that the British, Russians, and the Iranians had agreed upon concerning post-war Iran. In addition to this agreement, the three Allied heads of state, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin met in Tehran in November 1943 to further discuss the

⁴⁵ Gunther Nollau and Hans Jurgen Wiehe, *Russia's South Flank: Soviet Operations in Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963).

⁴⁶ Nollau and Wiehe, *Russia's South Flank*.

⁴⁷ J.C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record 1914-1956*, Volume II (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1956).

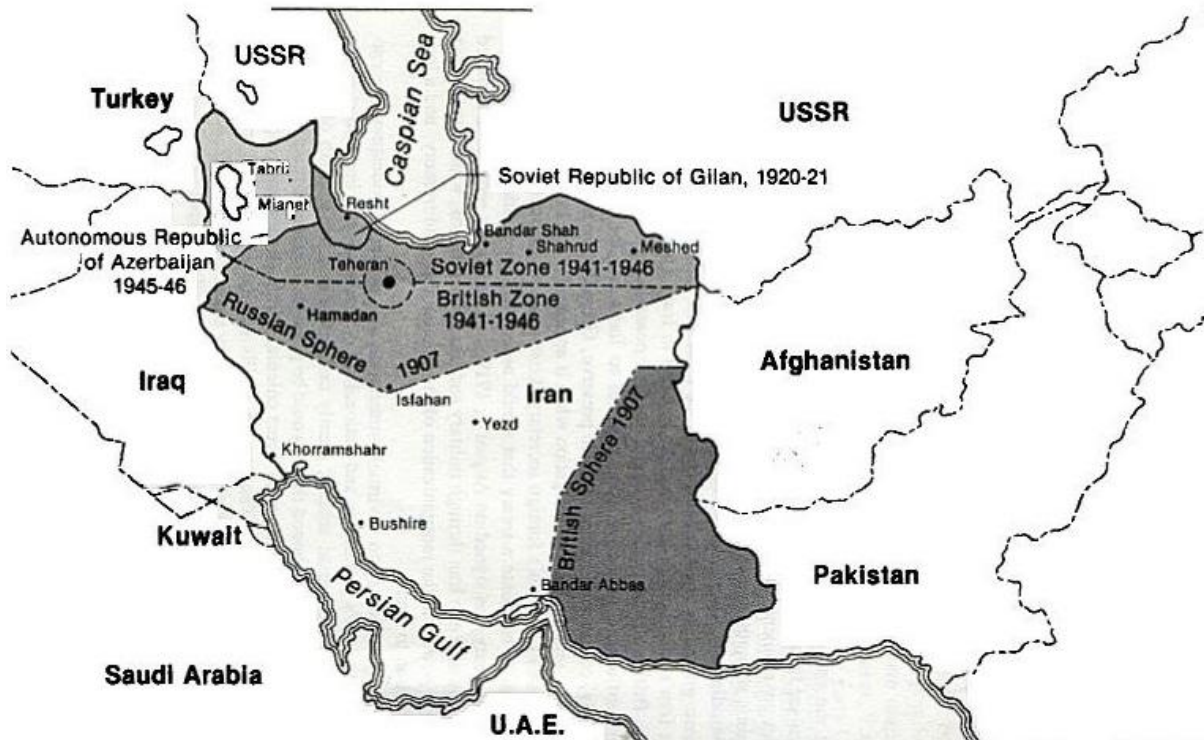
Iranian situation. Through this meeting, when an agreement was ultimately reached on December 1, 1943, the three countries pledged that Iran would remain a sovereign country following the war, and would be provided with the necessary elements to help the country's reconstruction efforts and future development⁴⁸.

While the British were willing to withdraw their forces from the south, except in those areas that were rich in oil, the Soviets were far more insistent upon continuing to have a presence within the northern part of the country. The Russians sought an oil concession and desired to spread communism to some of the areas where they had established a bastion⁴⁹. According to William Polk, a former member of U.S. President John F. Kennedy's administration, "the Russians remained in control of the north, where, under their protective wings, two 'Soviet' republics had come into existence: the Republic of Gilan...and the Mahabad Republic in the Kurdish area. The Soviet government, naturally, wanted to protect these extensions of communist rule, but at the same time, reviving old imperial aims, it wanted an oil concession in Iran"⁵⁰. While two of the aforementioned Allies would hold true to this agreement, one was unwilling. The Soviets were not going to leave the country without some pressure.

⁴⁸ George Lenczowski, *American Presidents and the Middle East* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990).

⁴⁹ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran*.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 109. See map on p. 21 for British and Russian gains in Iran.



(Map of Russian and British Influence in Persia: dcr.csusb.edu)

Following the end of the war, Mohammed Reza was presented with the unenviable task of trying to expel the Russians from his country. Once the Soviets realized that they were going to come out on the side of the victors in WWII, communist activity within Iran increased⁵¹. Stalin's Russia "promoted the creation of two autonomous regimes in Iran's northwest province of Azerbaijan, and then refused to withdraw its troops from Iran as stipulated under an agreement signed with Britain and Iran in 1942 until it had won some important concessions

⁵¹ Firuz Kazemzadeh, "Soviet-Iranian Relations. A Quarter-Century of Freeze and Thaw." in *The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The Post World War II Era* ed. Iwo J. Lederer and Wayne s. Vucinich (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1974).

from the Iranian government”⁵². Stalin’s desire to further impact the future of Iran was also reiterated by Mohammed Reza Shah:

The great victor of World War II was neither Churchill nor Roosevelt, for all their eloquence, but Stalin. He pulled the strings at Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam, and he imposed a Soviet peace on the world that has now lasted for thirty-five years....Moscow saw the moment of opportunity for political action in Iran the day my father was forced to abdicate and leave the country⁵³.

According to Louise Fawcett⁵⁴, the Russians were insistent upon establishing ties with Azerbaijan because of the role of the communists within Persia. This made it impossible for the United States to not become involved in this dispute⁵⁵ and also showed the Russians that they were not going to be able to dictate the future of Iran.

Although he was new to the throne, Mohammed Reza was not going to let the Soviets dictate the status of Azerbaijan. He believed that it was his duty to protect his people and Mohammed Reza was not going to let the Russian advance go unnoticed: “I refused; pointing out that our army threatened nothing and no one. We were merely reestablishing the status quo and preparing general elections in a territory that belonged to us”⁵⁶. Mohammed Reza’s stance showed both his people and the world that he was prepared to defend his country. It was in this instance that the Shah faced his first true test as the leader of Iran. This interference by the Soviets resulted in the creation of separatist movements in Northern Iran. As a result,

⁵² Louise Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2.

⁵³ Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 73.

⁵⁴ Louise Fawcett is a MacArthur Scholar and Junior Research Fellow in the International Relations of the Developing World, Exeter College, Oxford.

⁵⁵ Louise Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War*.

⁵⁶ Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 77.

Mohammed Reza turned to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for assistance in dealing with the Soviets. The complaint that was posed by the Iranian government documented Soviet involvement in the formation of rebel groups consisting of both Azeris from Azerbaijan, and Kurds from the Kurdish establishment within the country⁵⁷.

The involvement of the Soviet Union in Iran took a turn for the better in the eyes of the Persians in April 1946, when an agreement was reached that required the Soviets to withdraw from the territory. In a letter to the President of the Security Council dated April 15th, the Iranian Ambassador made it known that he was confident that the Soviets would comply with the agreement: "As a result of the signature of the agreement between the Iranian Government and the Government of the Soviet Union, it has been agreed that the Red Army evacuate all Persian territory by the 6th of May, 1946. The Iranian Government has no doubt that this agreement will be carried out, but at the same time has not the right to fix the course the Security Council should take"⁵⁸. Despite the fact that it was difficult for both the UN and the Iranians to ensure that all Soviet forces had in fact left the country, it was widely speculated that those in uniform had in fact left. However, it was still believed that some non-uniformed members of the Soviet Army were in fact still present within certain areas of the country⁵⁹. The Shah's decision to turn to the UNSC was pivotal as they were able to persuade the Soviets to leave. At a speaking engagement in San Francisco, CA on September 22, 1948, President Harry S. Truman recalled the use of the UN to expel the Soviets:

⁵⁷ Ruhollah K. Ramzani, *Iran's Foreign Policy 1941-1973: A Study of Foreign Policy in Modernizing Nations* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1975).

⁵⁸ Yonah Alexander and Allan Nanes, *The United States and Iran: A Documentary History* (Frederick, MD: Aletheia Books, 1980), 172.

⁵⁹ Yonah Alexander and Allan Nanes, *The United States and Iran*.

When the United Nations was less than a year old, the Security Council was faced with the problem of Soviet troops invading the small and weak country of Iran located south of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. Action by the Security Council helped persuade the Soviet Government to pull its troops out of Iran. Iran remained an independent country⁶⁰.

Through Truman's comments, it is clear that the UN was not going to allow Iran to fall victim to Soviet aggression. Both the United States and the UNSC were determined to protect the sovereignty of Iran following the end of World War II.

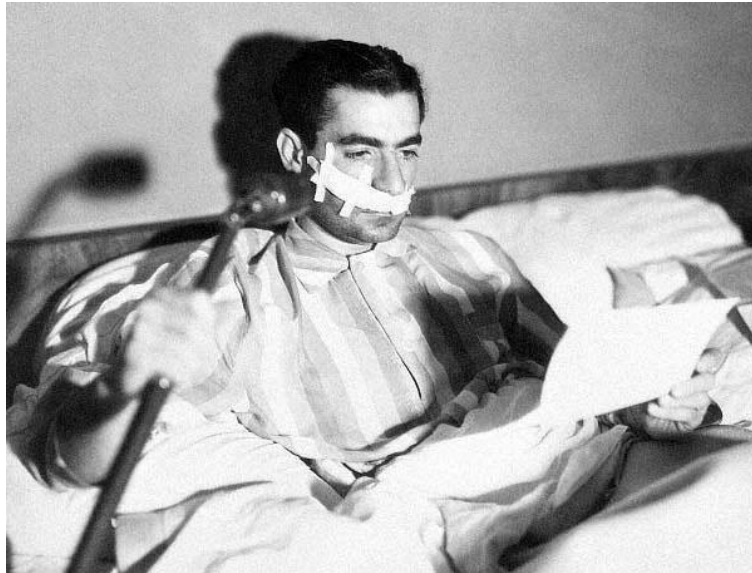
It was in the waning years of the war that the communist Tudeh party, an organization with close ties to Moscow⁶¹, posed a significant threat to Mohammed Reza. His bravery and determination in dealing with the Soviets had paid off as the expulsion of the Soviets seemed to be almost entirely fulfilled. Despite the fact that the communist threat was believed to have been eliminated, an assassination attempt on the Shah's life in 1949, led the government to believe that the Tudeh party still posed a significant threat. The attempt on Mohammed Reza's life came at an annual reception to celebrate the founding of Tehran University. Even though the assailant, Fakhr Arai, was able to get off three shots at close proximity, Mohammed Reza survived. While it would have been better for the Iranian government to have captured Arai and question him, he was shot dead. It was later discovered that Arai had close ties to the Tudeh party⁶². Their alignment with the Soviet Union raised questions about Soviet involvement in the plot. At the time, the main purpose of the Tudeh party was to oppose any

⁶⁰ Rose L. Greaves, 2001. "Iran's Pivotal Role In East-West Relations During World War II." Paper given in Tehran, Iran at International Conference on World War II, 6.

⁶¹ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Free Press, 1991).

⁶² Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*.

government within Iran that was affiliated with the Western powers through the dispute over oil, foreign and economic aid, and any government that had ties with Mohammed Reza⁶³.



**(Photo of Mohammed Reza Shah following an assassination attempt in 1949:
Courtesy: commons.wikimedia.org)**

For many Iranians, the idea of communism was very appealing, primarily to the poor. Further, communism was also something that university students, the intelligentsia, and a few members of the upper class felt that they could relate⁶⁴. While this was not going to be the last encounter that Mohammed Reza had with a form of opposition, he reacted decisively and prevailed.

The Military, the United States, and the Founding of the SAVAK

One cannot fault Mohammed Reza for his desire to continue to build a strong military. With the Cold War in full swing, Mohammed Reza believed it was extremely important for him

⁶³ Sepehr Zabih, *The Mossedegh Era: Roots of the Iranian Revolution* (Chicago: Lake View Press, 1982).

⁶⁴ Firuz Kazemzadeh, "Ideological Crisis in Iran".

to maintain a strong military. However, the Shah's military spending was a bit excessive and adversely affected his people:

Probably no other foreign official has had such direct and almost limitless access to conventional U.S. military assistance....So many more weapons were purchased than was necessary that in one particular year in the 1970s there was a shortage of cement for housing foundations because most of it was being used to build bunkers for all the new military hardware⁶⁵.

The willingness of the United States to sell large amounts of weaponry to the Iranian dictator was also advantageous to the Americans. In order to maintain a relative level of stability within the Persian Gulf region, a strong Iran was necessary. The desire of the U.S. to make Iran a viable power in the Middle East continued to become evident during the coming years.

It was essential for the United States to ensure that Mohammed Reza was a strong figure with a capable army to keep a sense of stability within the Middle East. Given that many of the leaders in the other countries within the region were more heavily influenced by Islam, the U.S. government turned toward Mohammed Reza to maintain order. However, when this role of guardianship was threatened by Mohammed Mossedegh in 1951⁶⁶, the U.S. decided that they needed to do more to support the Shah and restore him to power. Much of this was a result of the rising tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union at the close of World War II. Further, both the British and Americans were becoming increasingly concerned over the close relationship between Mossedegh's National Front party, and the communist Tudeh

⁶⁵ David W. Lesch, 1979: *The Year that Shaped the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2001), 32.

⁶⁶ See above explanation of Mossedegh and Operation Ajax, p. 6.

party⁶⁷. According to Ussama Makdisi, (an associate professor in the Department of History at Rice University), the Cold War was the impetus for the U.S. to ensure that the Shah was strong and capable of defending the Gulf region:

The Cold War exacerbated the suspicion felt by U.S. policy makers toward any potentially destabilizing force in the Middle East, particularly populist secular Iranian and Arab nationalisms. In Iran, for example, after the parliament nationalized the British-dominated Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) organized the overthrow in 1953 of the nationalist prime minister Mohammed Mossadeq. Thereafter, the United States supported the absolutist dictatorship of Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, rationalizing or ignoring the tremendous popular disaffection with Pahlavi rule⁶⁸.

After his restoration to the throne, the Shah's grip on his country grew stronger with the assistance of the U.S. government.

Following the 1953 coup, the American's began to question the capability of the Shah as a leader and sought to assist him more with internal security matters and via armed support. Since Mossadeq was able to win the support of the Iranian people, it led the U.S. government to believe that the Shah was not viewed positively by the average Iranian. If Mohammed Reza was going to be a strong ally of the U.S., then the Americans had to take control of the situation. According to Robert Komer of the National Security Council (NSC), the U.S. was skeptical of the Shah's ability to be a stabilizing force within the Middle East:

One of the very first problems we had was Iran because of the shah, who had returned after Mosaddeq, was feeling much more uncertain in his country. There was a certain increase in pressures on him, though the pressures were mostly domestic rather than foreign. He was frustrated. He was complaining. It looked as though we were heading

⁶⁷ David Lesch, 1979.

⁶⁸ Ussama Makdisi, "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History." *The Journal of American History* 89, No. 2 (2002): 538-557.

maybe for an overthrow, or an attempted revolution. This raised the question, first off, of whether the shah was an adequate instrument. Whether the shah could run things in Iran. Or whether he was not likely to be picked off by his domestic opposition. The question became one of “Is the shah modernized enough to get along in the mid-twentieth century?” Or didn’t he try to emphasize too much the divine right of kings, which we all knew came from World War I and his father who had been a sergeant in the Cossacks⁶⁹.

Komer suggests that the United States questioned the abilities of the Shah. As a result, the Americans took it upon themselves to ensure that he was a powerful ruler in a troubled area.

The signing of the Baghdad Pact on May 2, 1955⁷⁰, helped serve as an impetus for Mohammed Reza to seek further assistance from the United States and to establish a strong army and internal organization of force. As a means to quell his fears of Soviet aggression and internal opposition, the Shah looked for a way to draw himself closer to both the U.S. and Britain⁷¹. In accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, it was agreed that each country had the right to defend itself⁷². According to the pact, its purpose “was to establish cooperation in the defense of the Middle East, not just consultation. Article 5 of the pact was clearly aimed at the creation of a broader alliance as it anticipated members of the Arab League and ‘any other state actively concerned with the security and defense of the region’”⁷³. The Cold War caused the U.S. to become increasingly concerned that the Soviet Union would try to push communism into Iran. The Shah looked to use this to his benefit: “Shah tempted approach Soviets in order

⁶⁹ Gholam Reza Afkhami, *The Life and Times of the Shah*, 216.

⁷⁰ Richard L. Jasse, “The Baghdad Pact: Cold War or Colonialism?” *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, Issue 1 (1991): 140-156.

⁷¹ Shaul Bakash, “The Post-Mossadeq Era and the Shah’s White Revolution.” In *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, DC: United States Government as represented by the Secretary of the Army, 1989), 31-34.

⁷² Richard L. Jasse, “The Baghdad Pact: Cold War or Colonialism?”

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 140.

(sic): (1) frighten US into more aid and, in his mind, more whole-hearted support his regime”⁷⁴.

The Shah’s approach to the Soviets for aid alarmed the United States and made them more apt and willing to assist Mohammed Reza. The move by the Shah exacerbated the United States’ desire to make Iran a secure country and an ally of the U.S.

The year 1957 marked a pivotal time in Mohammed Reza’s reign. To ensure that his tight rule continued, the Americans helped him to establish an internal security force that would permeate all aspects of Iranian society. In addition, the U.S. continued to aid the Shah in his desire to build up his military. The new and improved apparatuses that the Shah had at his disposal bolstered his ability to maintain power:

The Americans set up a highly effective intelligence operation, which in 1957 became SAVAK, the Iranian acronym for the National Intelligence and Security Organisation (sic). The United States established its largest military aid mission in the world in Tehran, and between 1953 and 1961 the United States assisted with the rapid expansion of the Shah’s military forces from 120,000 to 200,000⁷⁵.

With the increased size of the army and the newly established SAVAK, the Shah felt that it was time to use his power to his advantage. His political opponents had overrun him in the past, and Mohammed Reza wanted to make certain that this would not occur again:

From 1953 onwards, the Shah began to grant ever-increasing powers to the army and later to the SAVAK, the deadly efficient political police that was created, trained, equipped, and actively aided by the CIA to crush all opposition to the throne. In 1957 and 1958, laws were passed in violation of the Iranian Constitution (not to speak of UN Declaration of Human Rights) giving full authority to SAVAK to deal with what the regime considered to be anti-monarchist activities. And by 1960, even these laws had lost all

⁷⁴ Foreign Relations of the United States, Nov. 7, 1957. Vol. 12, 1955-1957, Near East: Iran; Iraq, Document 410, 952.

⁷⁵ Con Coughlin *Khomeini’s Ghost*, 90.

meaning, since mass arrests, unjustified detentions, institutionalized torture, military tribunals, prison murders, and executions had become commonplace⁷⁶.

The Shah's newly created police state was the first element that began to widen the rift between Mohammed Reza and his people. While the Shah believed that the use of force to suppress the opposition was a measure that he needed to impose to maintain power, he decided that it was necessary to further limit the ability of the populace to speak out against his rule. Mohammed Reza chose to censor the press, and he made it virtually impossible for independent publications to survive. Further, the publication of magazines, books, and newspapers were not allowed if they criticized any aspect of the regime⁷⁷. The ability of the SAVAK to infiltrate all aspects of Iranian life helped Mohammed Reza maintain power. The SAVAK helped ensure that the Iranians were conducting themselves in a manner that was deemed suitable by the Shah of Iran.

Mohammed Reza's determination to build his army into a formidable power was becoming more of a concern by the end of 1957. As a result, the Shah continued to try and persuade the U.S. to help him achieve his goal. In a memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, South Asian, and African Affairs, William M. Rountree (1956-1959), to the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles (1953-1959), Rountree thoroughly explained the situation as he saw it in Iran and what he believed was needed to be done to appease the Shah. According to Rountree, the Shah was requesting far more aid from the U.S. government than it was willing to offer. The Iranian army requested supplies and aid that would have amounted to

⁷⁶ Mehdi Pourkarimi, *Iran and the Collapse of the Monarchy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1980), 118.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

between \$300 and \$500 million and further, the Shah himself was requesting some 2000 additional supplies, with weapons that had nuclear capabilities for the enlarged Iranian navy. While the U.S. was only willing to promise \$40 million worth of aid (\$20 million of which was designated for military construction) they hoped that the significant difference would not adversely affect the Shah's confidence in the United States' support for his country. While the U.S. was unable to meet the Shah's demands, the U.S. did offer recoilless weapons, howitzers and M-47 tanks⁷⁸. Despite the fact that Mohammed Reza was not fully satisfied with the U.S. governments' support, the U.S. was able to placate the ruler to an extent. The Americans continued support for the Shah would show how much they desired to support a strong Iran.

For the United States, it was imperative for Iran to establish itself as a dominating force within the Persian Gulf. The abundance of oil within this area was the prime reason why the U.S. government wanted to play an active role in the region. As a result, many U.S. Presidents after WWII showed a keen interest in both the Shah and Iran. Without the stability that the Shah was looked on to provide within the region, the U.S. believed that their oil needs would grow increasingly more difficult to fulfill. It was especially after the oil boom of 1973 that the interest of the U.S. in Iran increased further. At the same time, the Shah wanted to ensure that his military needs were going to continue to be met in order to protect his throne. However, the election of Jimmy Carter as President of the United States in 1976 threatened the Shah's ability to maintain order in his police state⁷⁹.

⁷⁸ Foreign Relations of the United States, Oct. 12, 1957. Vol. 12, 1955-1957, Near East: Iran; Iraq, Document 409.

⁷⁹ As it continued to become more evident that Mohammed Reza was torturing, imprisoning, and killing those who challenged his regime, President Carter, a renowned human rights activist, began to turn up the heat on the Shah

In order to appease President Carter, the Shah began to reform certain aspects of his government. Mohammed Reza called for free elections, reduced censorship of the press, and certain judicial measures that put a halt to the torture that the SAVAK had levied and increased the rights of imprisoned political prisoners⁸⁰. Unfortunately for the Shah, “the reforms had the undesired effect of emboldening the shah’s opponents, however, and thus paving the way for the nascent revolutionary movement”⁸¹. While the Shah did in fact decide to move forward with some reforms, former British Ambassador to Iran, Anthony Parsons (1974-1979) believed that there was more to the story:

It was, in terms of the Shah’s survival, the worst moment at which to raise the political lid. However, I would, as a Western European, have found it impossible to recommend to London, and my government would have found it equally impossible to concur in such advice, that we should oppose a decision by the Shah to allow more freedom of expression and to ease up on repression of his people. The same would no doubt have been true of President Carter who was elected on November 4th 1976 and inaugurated as President of the U.S.A. in January 1977. Equally I do not believe that, at that stage, the Shah would have been susceptible to direct advice either from the Americans or from ourselves. I am inclined to think that there was nothing which either of us could have done, even if we had wished to do something, and that the likelihood was that the Shah had decided to liberalise (sic) for his own reasons, a secondary consideration in his mind being that to do so would help to ingratiate him with the new American administration which was from the outset trumpeting his belief in human rights, democracy and the evils of over-arming Third World dictatorships, however friendly⁸².

While the Shah had been a recipient of American aid for much of his rule, his luck was about to abruptly run out. President Carter made it very difficult for the Shah to continue to make

of Iran. Jimmy Carter began to limit military and other foreign aid to Iran until the Shah proved that he could improve his human rights record.

⁸⁰ Philip Pilevsky, *I Accuse: Jimmy Carter and the Rise of Militant Islam* (Dallas, TX: Durban House Publishing Company, Inc., 2007).

⁸¹ Ibid., 67.

⁸² Anthony Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall: Iran 1974-1979* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984), 145.

concessions to his people as the mood in Iran grew increasingly ripe for revolution. At this juncture, U.S. aid had run its course.

The Shah and the Clerics

Another key component that contributed to the Shah's fall from power was his handling of the religious element within the country. Following the establishment of the Pahlavi Dynasty in 1925⁸³ Reza Shah began to modernize the country. To keep a firm grasp on power, Reza Shah also sought to keep the religious elements at bay by reducing their power:

Reza Shah had the mullahs' support when he pronounced himself king in 1926. At that time the mullahs were the country's principal teachers, and in many rural areas, they had become prominent landowners who collected taxes on their property. But Reza Shah's introduction of reforms, including new civil, commercial, and penal codes that diminished the power of the ulama, coupled with his expansion of the secular school system, infuriated the entrenched clerics, whose power had shrunk considerably by the time he abdicated in 1941⁸⁴.

His reforms angered the clerical establishment, but they enabled Reza Shah to put down any insurrections that these individuals might have inspired. Further attempts to limit the power of the ulema were sought by Reza Shah to guarantee that they would not have the necessary tools to pose a problem for him.

Upon his ascension to power in 1941, Mohammed Reza Shah desired to further the necessary precautions put in place by his father concerning the religious leaders of Qum. Qum served as the religious center of Iran, where the majority of the mullahs resided. It was from

⁸³ Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since the First World War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

⁸⁴ Philip Pilevsky, *I Accuse*, 58-59.

this city that many of the religious decrees originated. Reza Shah limited the power of the clerics through both social and cultural reforms:

Reza Shah sought to implement social and cultural changes designed to weaken the clerical establishment and modernize the country. These included judicial reforms in 1926, which led to the replacement of the *sharia* with a secular civil code, and the banning of traditional ethnic clothes in 1928 in preference for European-style clothing and Pahlavi caps...The same year a law was passed regarding the examination and licensing of religious students and teachers, and the authority of the Ministry of Education was expanded in 1934. The University of Tehran was also established in 1934, complete with a Theology Faculty designed to further undermine the influence of the Qom clerics. Finally, beginning in January 1936, women were forbidden to publically wear the veil (*chador*), and they resisted assault and arrest by the police if they were caught in public with their veils on⁸⁵.

Reza Shah's hard-line approach with the religious establishment did not do Mohammed Reza any favors with the ulema. In fact, following the abdication of his father, the ulema were able to regroup and re-assert their influence on the Iranian people. Many women began wearing chadors, which Reza Shah had banned in 1936⁸⁶. The dismissal of Reza Shah left the door wide open for the ulema to promote a greater influence of Islam in everyday life. The arrival of the Ayatollah Khomeini as a mainstay of the religious establishment in Iran in the early 1960's, made things very difficult for Mohammed Reza over the next 15 years. Khomeini worked feverishly to gain support from the people of Iran. He became an outspoken critic of the regime that was viewed in high regard by many Iranians.

Mohammed Reza's close relations with the U.S. exacerbated the ulema's abhorrence for the ruler. Despite Mohammed Reza's numerous attempts to limit the power of Khomeini, his

⁸⁵ Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East*, 60.

⁸⁶ Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003)

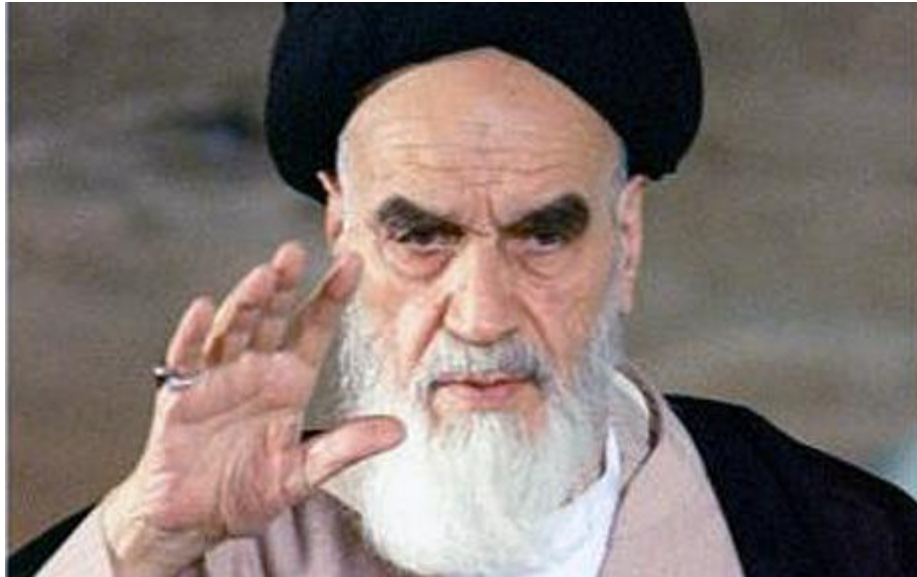
influence was too strong. The Shah's repeated attempts to jail the cleric and send him abroad increased his influence among the people. Further, the religious establishment's elevation of Khomeini to the role of ayatollah made him much more difficult for both the clerics and the Shah to handle: "The biggest mistake the senior clerics made at this time was to acknowledge Khomeini's rank as an ayatollah to save him from the gallows", said a religious student from the period who initially supported Khomeini, but later switched his allegiance. 'This placed Khomeini above the law and made it impossible for the Shah to curb his activities'"⁸⁷. Once receiving the status of ayatollah, Khomeini was now, in some respects, above the jurisdiction of the Iranian government. This new standing allowed for Khomeini to challenge the Shah without the fear of prosecution:

The important factor from Khomeini's point of view was that his ayatollah status provided him with immunity from prosecution by the civil courts. The state had set the precedent of prosecuting senior clergy by executing Khomeini's hero Ayatollah Nuri, who went to the gallows for his part in the revolt against the Constitutional Revolution. But this was an extreme measure taken in extreme circumstances, and the Shah had no desire to provoke irreversible rupture with the clerical establishment, which Khomeini's execution would undoubtedly have caused⁸⁸.

Since the Shah's hands appeared to be tied regarding Khomeini, the best that he could do was send the ayatollah abroad. However, once this occurred, Khomeini still had the ability to communicate with those who shared his beliefs in Iran. Further, Khomeini's popularity grew as he continued to oppose the Shah.

⁸⁷ Con Coughlin, *Khomeini's Ghost*, 108.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 107-108.



(Photo of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini Courtesy: famous-relationships.topsyenergy.com)

Despite Mohammed Reza sending Khomeini into exile to Iraq, Khomeini used his influence to garner support for his obsession, which was the establishment of an Islamic Republic within Iran. Under Reza Shah, the power of the ulema was limited when the Shah stripped them of the activities that they had grown accustomed to dealing with, such as their ability to act as judges, teachers, and the administering of pious foundations. Like his father, Mohammed Reza viewed the ulema with contempt.

In 1962, Mohammed Reza imposed a law “regulating the election of local councils...the measure was a step toward democracy and emancipation of minorities, but the *ulama*, saw it as an attack on religion and began to agitate against it”⁸⁹. According to William R. Polk⁹⁰, Mohammed Reza’s policies led to two pivotal mistakes that encouraged some of the religious students to support the ayatollah. However, Mohammed Reza ultimately cancelled his newly

⁸⁹ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran*, 119.

⁹⁰ Polk served in the Kennedy administration as a supervisor of American policy on the Islamic world.

imposed law, following a disturbance by the seminary students. As a result, the students viewed this as a victory⁹¹, making it clear that they could make a difference and bring about change. The second mistake that Mohammed Reza made, in an attempt to suppress the religious seminary students, was sending paratroopers into a school in Qum, in March 1963, which resulted in the death of two students and injury of others from severe beatings⁹². While the students had already opposed Mohammed Reza at this time, this only added fuel to the fire. The students continued to revere Khomeini as a man who possessed the bravery to challenge the regime and fight for an Iran that was more heavily focused on Islam. The support for Khomeini continued to grow as he disseminated his beliefs from Najaf, Iraq: "As he poured forth a torrent of letters, pamphlets, tracts, and audiocassettes, his campaign enrolled not only thousands of *mollas*, teachers, and students but also the by then disaffected urban poor and rural farmers"⁹³. Khomeini's ability to reach the urban poor and rural farmers would later encourage him to incite a revolution that would ultimately lead to the fall of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi.

Land Reform and the Restructuring of Education

Land Reform

One of the first reforms Mohammed Reza enacted was the Land Reform Law in 1957. Through this law, the Shah limited the amount of land that an Iranian could possess. However, this legislation was met with fierce opposition by the Majlis, as the majority of these individuals

⁹¹ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran*.

⁹² Ibid., 119.

⁹³ Ibid., 120.

held large tenets of land. It was not until 1960 that the Majlis approved an amended version of this legislation that allowed for a landowner to maintain 3,000 acres of land; 1,000 of which was irrigated and the other 2,000 as non-irrigated. Despite the measure, the government had no effective means to regulate this restriction. Further, the religious leaders argued that the desire of the government to impose restrictions on private property violated the tenets of Islam⁹⁴. Despite the consternation from the religious community, the Shah pushed forward with his land reforms which positively impacted the Iranian economy.

One of the ultimate objectives of the Shah's propagating a land reform campaign was to earn the support of the Iranian peasantry. In Iran during the 1960's there was a resurgence of opposition to the monarchy from the middle class. The distribution of land was Mohammed Reza's solution to counteract the anti-Shah sentiment that pervaded the middle class:

From 1953-1960, the people were relatively silent, though restless, but in 1960 they broke a repressive period of silence and began to challenge the regime. Thus, Iran again fell victim to riots, chaos and political movements. The middle class intelligentsia, made up of students and teachers, led the upheavals. They posed a serious threat to the Shah's political system; and the Shah thus decided to address himself to that sector of society that he thought would support his government—the peasants⁹⁵.

The landowners in the Iranian countryside used their power to make life very difficult for the peasant class. The oppression and poverty that permeated the peasant class made the Pahlavi regime very susceptible to revolt. As a result, the Shah believed that he had to take matters into his own hands and could do so through land redistribution. The ultimate purpose of the "Shah's land reform was designed to accelerate national building, stabilize the political system,

⁹⁴ Rose Greaves, "1942-1976: The Reign of Muhammed Riza Shah." in *Twentieth-Century Iran* ed. Hossein Amirsadeghi (London: Heinemann, 1977), 81.

⁹⁵ Abbas Manafy, *The Causes and Effects of Iranian Revolution* (Azerbaijan: Tabriz University, 1980). 37.

enhance the image of the regime and remove the last vestiges of obstruction from the political scene; that is, to break up the Empire of Feudalism”⁹⁶. With this new found sense of worth, the peasants began to view their situation more favorably. In fact, they even saw a glimmer of hope in a situation that they previously regarded as dismal:

The former peasant no longer sees any reason why his children should remain illiterate. He begins to develop a new attitude toward civic rights and personal property: why shouldn't he have good schools, health clinics, better housing and food, and the other niceties of urban, industrial life?...He is more willing to allow his wife to work outside the home....He rears his daughters to go without the veil and may even approve miniskirts as a symbol of the new way of life⁹⁷.

This transformation of life for the Iranian peasant gave them hope that their future generations would not face the immense difficulties that they had grown so accustomed to deal with. However, through the Shah's land reform policy, “the state was a major gainer from land reform because it replaced the big landlord as the dominant social, economic and political factor in the countryside. Peasants receiving land had been obliged to join co-operatives which became agencies of government control”⁹⁸. By 1963 the Shah had earned the support of the peasants. As a result, they would not be the ones who incited the revolution, given his willingness to improve their livelihood.

Mohammed Reza's desire to improve the life of the Iranian peasantry allowed for the peasants to take more control of their lives, or so they thought:

⁹⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁹⁷ Roger M. Savory (1978). “Social Development in Iran During the Pahlavi Era.” in *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press), 110.

⁹⁸ M.E. Yapp, *The Near East Since the First World War: A History to 1995* (2nd Edition) (Harlow, England: Longman, 1996), 336.

As for the peasants themselves, they, no less than the landowners and other classes in Persia, are unpractised (sic) in the art of co-operation; there is no evidence which suggests that they would be able in the immediate future to run any co-operative undertaking successfully. In most areas the peasant is so fully occupied with the problems of day to day existence that he has little energy left for political or other activities⁹⁹.

However, Mohammed Reza had not realized the potential negative perceptions of the more powerful classes on the land reform program. Throughout history, the peasant class has often been the ones who have incited a revolution. In Iran, it was not the peasants who the Shah should have been concerned, but rather the middle class intelligentsia.

When discussing the Iranian middle class, it is important to distinguish them from the other classes that made up Persian society. Differences in socio-economic class can often be thought of as rather complex, when in reality, they are rather easy to understand¹⁰⁰. According to Aristotle, “in every city the people are divided into three sorts: the very rich, the very poor, and those who are between them’. This classification illustrates the elusive quality of the middle class: a residue after easily identifying the rich and the poor”¹⁰¹. In Iran, there are two distinctions within the middle class, modern and traditional. The modern middle class was comprised of individuals who had obtained a Western education and worked in the fields of government services, the professions, and the universities, which came out of a modern bureaucracy that began during the latter part of the nineteenth century¹⁰². According to James

⁹⁹ Ann K.S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant in Persia: A Study of Land Tenure and Land Revenue Administration* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 396.

¹⁰⁰ Monroe Berger, “The Middle Class in the Arab World.” in *The Middle East in Transition* ed. Walter Z. Lacqueur (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1958).

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 62.

¹⁰² Laraine Newhouse Carter, “Social Systems.” in *Iran: A Country Study* ed. Richard F. Nyrop (Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1978), 137-178.

A. Bill¹⁰³: “One of the most profound unintended consequences of the White Revolution¹⁰⁴ is the accelerating growth of the professional middle class”¹⁰⁵. On the other hand, the traditional middle class consisted of the mullahs, wealthy guild merchants, and the merchants of the Iranian bazaars. This distinction signified the dividing lines when the revolution began to take shape in the late 1970s. The more traditional middle class was far more interested in siding with the religious establishment within Iranian society and agreed with their desire to transform Iran into a religious country¹⁰⁶. While education allowed for certain members of the middle class to achieve more promising lives, it was of little interest to the more traditional members of the Iranian middle class.

At this time, the students and the teachers were the two groups that posed the greatest threat to the regime. These individuals were the most susceptible to fall prey to the revolutionary rhetoric of the mullahs, and the mullahs took full advantage of the young Iranian population: “The combination of high birth rates and relatively low death rates produced a very youthful population, 46 percent being under 15 years of age, 51 percent between 15 and 64, and only three percent 65 and over”¹⁰⁷. As a result of the large youthful population, Iran was ripe for revolution. Despite the fact that Mohammed Reza did not fully realize the threat that was mounting against him, he was able to secure the support of most of the peasant class.

¹⁰³ James A. Bill is a Professor at the University of Texas at Austin and a Director of the Center of Middle Eastern Studies.

¹⁰⁴ The White Revolution of 1963-1975 sought to reduce the level of inequality among the Iranian people. There were several goals of the White Revolution. These reforms dealt primarily with land reform, women’s rights, changes to the educational and health systems, reconstruction, social security and adjustments to industrial ownership. More a complete list of all of the goals of the White Revolution and a more thorough explanation, see Abbas Manafy’s *The Causes and Effects of Iranian Revolution*.

¹⁰⁵ Laraine Newhouse Carter, “Social Systems”, 157

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Mehdi Pourkarimi, *Iran and the Collapse of the Monarchy*, 93-94.

Through this, the Shah believed that a revolution remained unlikely. While his judgment was correct at this time, Mohammed Reza did not properly judge the swiftness with which the revolution would gain support through the middle class intelligentsia approximately 15 years later.

Restructuring of Educational System to Solidify Hold on Power

The Iranian educational system dates back thousands of years. The system in practice in 1963 was the same system used by the French. As a result, the Shah felt that an overhaul was necessary. Much of the success that Mohammed Reza had achieved within the educational system was largely due to the groundwork that Reza Shah had laid. It was from this groundwork that Mohammed Reza was able to build. Knowing that the importance of education was necessary to achieve success, Reza Shah allocated substantial financial allotments to the educational system: “Realizing the value of education in modernizing Iran, the Shah placed top priority on education, ordering generous financial allocations and building up an extensive education network”¹⁰⁸. Further, the Shah believed that it was imperative to increase education domestically, and establish a well-organized study abroad program that would offer Iranian students exposure to foreign learning environments. In turn, this would allow those students who studied abroad to increase their knowledge and make more of a positive contribution to the government when they returned home. Reza Shah’s study abroad program was implemented in 1928 and continued to expand education through the founding of

¹⁰⁸ Abdol Hussein Samii, M. Reza Vaghefi, Dariush Nowrasteh, *Systems of Higher Education: Iran*. (New York: Interbook, 1978), 3.

the Tehran Teachers College and the establishment of Tehran University in 1934¹⁰⁹: “The University of Tehran was the cornerstone university development in modern Iran, and it continues to have the largest student body – 30 percent of the total students enrolled in higher education”¹¹⁰. This flagship university would serve as a model for all of those that would follow under the rule of Mohammed Reza: “Like his father, he was intent on making Iran independent and strong. To this end...he fostered the spread of education and training. During the last 15 years of his reign, as oil income rose, the number of schools, colleges, universities, and training schools multiplied”¹¹¹. The early struggles and moderate successes of Reza Shah allowed for his son to bring the Iranian educational system to an opulent state.

At the time of the White Revolution, illiteracy was common in Iranian society. As a result, the government had one goal in mind; teach the people how to read. According to Ali-Pour-Moghaddas, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Isfahan, Mohammed Reza’s regime “had chiefly aimed at the training of civil servants for the then newly-established ministries and government departments, replacing the old government staff members of a traditionally-based administrative system”¹¹². While those in the cities were more likely to be literate, it was the Iranian peasantry and their families that bore the brunt of the poor educational facilities in the countryside:

Foremost among these was illiteracy, which despite the fact that compulsory state education had been on the statute books since the early days of Reza Shah, still ran as high as 80 to 85 percent in some areas because of the lack of facilities, the teachers’ reluctance to work in the villages, and resistance on the part of the peasants and

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹¹¹ William R. Polk, *Understanding Iran*, 116.

¹¹² Ali Pour-Moghaddas, “Higher Education and Development in Iran.” *Higher Education* 4, No. 3, 370.

tribesmen themselves to the idea of sending their children to school when their labor was needed in the fields or in the minding of flocks. Although some 70 percent of the population was rural, 75 percent of the teachers were concentrated in the urban areas¹¹³.

The rural location of the peasantry made it challenging for the regime to provide adequate educational facilities for those in the countryside. However, they were not without a representative who pushed for their education. Mohammad Bahman Beyqi took it upon himself to ensure that the Iranian peasant was not left behind when it came to education. Previous attempts to send the peasants to rural schools failed. As a result, Beyqi decided that he would take education to the peasants:

Rather than continuing the failed practice of trying to force tribal students to come to urban schools, Bahman Beyqi wanted to take the school to them, and the result was nothing short of transformative for the lives of about a hundred thousand people. He began by training a cadre of teachers—eventually numbering about ten thousand—to go to the tribes, travel with them, and, in the process, teach the children. Bahman Beyqi not only afforded them the luxury of literacy, but he helped change them from perpetual outsiders to assimilated insiders¹¹⁴.

Despite the fact that Beyqi's mission was not immediately well received by Mohammed Reza, he was ultimately able to secure funds to help his cause. The government provided Beyqi with 150,000 *tooman* (\$21,400). Therefore, Beyqi's initiative achieved success and his effect on the literacy of the Iranian peasant was impressive. Among the nomad population, it was estimated that in 1941 only about two hundred of these individuals were literate. By the end of the 20th

¹¹³ Richard M. Savory, "Social Development in Iran During the Pahlavi Era", 110.

¹¹⁴ Abbas Milani, *Eminent Persians: The Men and Women Who Made Modern Iran, 1941-1979* (Volume 2) (New York: Persian World Press, 2008), 954.

century, this number had skyrocketed to 200,000¹¹⁵. This success provided the Iranian peasants with the hope of a better future. However, this was just the beginning of the movement to educate the peasant class. Through the establishment of the Literacy Corps, Mohammed Reza hoped to see a precipitous rise in the literacy rate amongst those living in the countryside.

The Literacy Corps

The Shah's desire to deal with the problem of illiteracy was impacted in a positive manner through the founding of the Literacy Corps. At the close of 1962, the campaign to stamp out illiteracy was gaining steam. As a result of the sheer number of military personnel in Iran, Mohammed Reza looked to them to help achieve his goal. Given that the majority of the individuals who participated in the Literacy Corps program were young men, some members of the government feared that the young men may talk negatively about the Shah to those that they were expected to teach¹¹⁶. However, this was not the case. Participation in the program greatly improved the educator's prospects for the future. Therefore, they did not want to do anything that may jeopardize their careers:

Some feared that the youthful teachers from the cities would carry anti-government ideas to the villages, but this was not the case. As members of the Army, they took pride in their uniforms and the responsibilities they carried as in some small way representing the Shah, or at least the program. Whereas previously, elementary school training offered little opportunity for educational advancement, the Education Corps made it possible for a teacher to progress to supervisor, administration, and advanced training, even to the doctoral degree. This made it possible for even young men from

¹¹⁵ Abbas Milani, *Eminent Persians*.

¹¹⁶ Clarence Hendershot, *Politics, Polemics and Pedagogos: A Study of United States Technical Assistance in Education in Iran, Including Negotiations, Political Considerations in Iran and the United States, Programming, Methods, Problems, Results, and Evaluation* (New York: Vantage Press, 1975).

the villages and small towns to advance to the most exalted position in the profession¹¹⁷.

Through the Literacy Corps, the Shah provided his people with a legitimate opportunity to help themselves. This chance was not only afforded to the student, but also to the educator. Both could achieve better lives through hard work and determination. The educator's ability to advance their careers through participation in the program¹¹⁸, made the remote locations more tolerable. Mohammed Reza knew that if he could provide incentives to the educators that they would be more likely to work diligently in remote locations. The success that the program achieved demonstrated the Shah's willingness to help alleviate the hardships that those in the countryside endured.

With the main participants of the Literacy Corps program in place, it was time for the Shah to quantify how he would view success. The goal of his endeavor was to eradicate the illiteracy of as much as 60 percent of those Iranians who lived in the villages through the conscription of high school male graduates into the army to serve as teachers in the countryside. These male graduates were required to undergo a four month training period prior to their 14 month appointment as teachers of rural children. Mohammed Reza hoped that many of the estimated 1,662,000 children, who were not afforded the luxury of elementary education, would now reap the benefits of the literacy program. Despite the growing number of illiterate children in Iran since 1952, which saw an increase of 125 percent, it was believed that about 48 percent of all Iranian children were then enrolled in elementary

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 110.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

education. Of this number, only 27 percent resided in rural areas¹¹⁹. The Shah hoped to improve upon this number. With the future of Iran in the hands of the youth, the Shah knew that it was essential to improve the educational system. The success that he envisioned for his country was not attainable with the educational system that was in place.

One of the benefits of serving in the Literacy Corps was that it allowed for the young Iranian men to fulfill their two-year obligation of military service to their country. Both high school and university graduates comprised the Literacy Corps. Upon entering a village, one of the first tasks the Literacy Corps faced was to find an edifice that could serve as the school that would educate Iranian youth up through the sixth grade. With a large number of villages having little money, it was often required for the graduates to find a means to construct a building with the assistance of the government. The government would provide the necessary funding for the buildings, but the villagers were responsible for construction. This gave the villagers an enormous sense of entitlement; they took great pride in the buildings that they constructed and the education these places offered. Despite the fact that the corpsmen were dispatched to the villages to educate the children, their interaction with the people went far beyond that role. They served the people in several different capacities which ranged from health related problems, agricultural issues, and community concerns¹²⁰. As a result, the villagers responded favorably to the Literacy Corpsmen:

Villagers on the whole seem to cooperate willingly with Literacy Corpsmen. They provide all labour (sic) for building schools, baths, roads, bridges, mosques, etc. Most of the villages have a community fund to which they all contribute. This fund is cash on

¹¹⁹ Ben M. Harris, "'Literacy Corps' Iran's Gamble to Conquer Illiteracy." *International Review of Education* 9, No. 4, (1963-1964), 430-437.

¹²⁰ Roger M. Savory, "Social Development in Iran During the Pahlavi Era".

hand and permits some otherwise unfinanced projects to be carried out. When records are kept, it is usually the corpsman and the village chief who handle the books¹²¹.

Despite the fact that there were certain instances when the corpsmen would leave the village and return to the city prior to the completion of their 14 months, this did not happen frequently. While certain individuals within the corps did not invest all of their efforts into the program, the vast majority of the corpsmen were dedicated to the cause. This brought about a strong working relationship between the corpsmen and the villagers. Further, the strong collaboration increased the willingness of the corpsmen to remain in the village upon the completion of the mandatory 14 months¹²². With this, the educational component of the villages continued to thrive, allowing for the people to serve their country in some capacity. This was exactly the desire that the Shah hoped would result from his mission to wipe out illiteracy.

The establishment of the Literacy Corps was not the government's first attempt to deal with Iran's illiteracy problem. However, it was the swift training program that allowed for the Literacy Corps to get to the villages quickly and educate the youth:

Prior to the announcement of the decision to establish a Literacy Corps, a revision of the teacher program in the normal schools of the country had been implemented. The usual two-year period reduced to one year. The two-year program had included some young people who had not graduated from a twelve-year secondary school. The revised program called for admitting only twelve-year graduates for a one-year, intensive program of teacher training. Five thousand volunteers were anticipated for the 1962-63 school year. But when the Literacy Corps was decreed, the revised teacher training program using volunteer high school graduates was cut to 2,500 students. The net effect for 1962-63 was the procurement of a total of only 5000 new teachers...this did

¹²¹ Ibid., 111.

¹²² Ibid.

mean that the Literacy Corps program got a contingent of teachers into service a few months sooner than did the regular program. It is also assured that a larger share of the Literacy Corps trainees will serve in remote villages...the planned extension of conscriptions in another year to procure 10,000 Literacy Corps teachers offers the promise of a dramatic increase for the 1963-64 school year¹²³.

One of the most important results of the establishment of the Literacy Corps was the immediate increase in the number of individuals who were deemed qualified to teach. An increase in the number of educators allowed for the government to diversify its ability to spread education. For this reason, the Literacy Corps program was a success. It provided the Shah with the tools to reach those who had not previously had the luxury of attending school. With roughly 12 of the 20 million Iranian people living in about 45,000 villages, it was essential to find a means to educate these individuals. According to Assadollah Alam, who served as Minister of Court (1968-1977)¹²⁴, the Literacy Corps was perceived as the only effective means to reach the people in the countryside. Although the program was able to reach an increasing number of people in the Iranian countryside, the program was not without its complications.

One of the most notable flaws of the program was the lack of education provided to female villagers. At the onset, female students were left out. In fact, the government did not even propose a plan to educate girls, as only females could undertake that task. The military conscripts were all male. Therefore, female schools were not constructed, as male educators could not teach female students. However, in 1969, female graduates were allowed to participate in the Literacy Corps program, which opened the door for female education. To

¹²³ Ben M.Harris, "Literacy Corps' Iran's Gamble to Conquer Illiteracy", 433.

¹²⁴ Alinaghi Alikhani, *The Shah and I: The Confidential Diary of Iran's Royal Court (1969-1977)* (Great Britain: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 1992).

make this possible, the Literacy Corps would come to the villages of one of the female graduates and allow them to begin to educate the female youth. This was effective because it allowed for the female educators to live at home while teaching in, or near their own villages¹²⁵. According to Greg Mortenson, an expert on the impact of education on children who live in rural areas, the importance of educating female youth is paramount: “Once you educate the boys, they tend to leave the villages and go search for work in the cities,...But the girls stay home, become leaders in the community, and pass on what they’ve learned. If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic hygiene and health care, fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls”¹²⁶. The continued presence of educated females in communities, following their participation in the Literacy Corps program, proved to have a lasting impact on both the people and the village. In fact, in a study conducted by the World Bank, there was a positive correlation between the education of female youth and the future success of both the woman and her village:

Studies from the World Bank indicate that just *one* year of primary school can result in an income bump of 10 percent to 20 percent for women later in life. According to Yale economist Paul T. Schultz, an extra year of secondary school may raise that same girl’s lifetime wages by an additional 15 to 25 percent....A number of studies indicate that in communities where a majority of the girls are educated through the fifth grade, infant mortality drops significantly after a single generation. At the same time—and somewhat paradoxically---basic education for girls correlates perfectly with lower, more sustainable population growth. In communities where girls have received more education, they marry later and have fewer children than their illiterate counterparts¹²⁷.

¹²⁵ Savory, Roger M. Savory, “Social Development During the Pahlavi Era”.

¹²⁶ Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 209.

¹²⁷ Greg Mortenson, *Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, In Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Viking, 2009), 12.

Through the beckoning of females within the Iranian villages for the acceptance of girls into the Literacy Corps program, the Shah was willing to adhere to their demands. He knew that through the expansion of knowledge, positive results would be attained. However, these effects, aside from the reduction in infant mortality, would take some time to surface. The admittance of females into the Education Corps program effectively contributed to the reduction of infant mortality, which ultimately worked against the Shah. As infant mortality declined, the longevity of an Iranian's life increased, thus leading to a growing population. This dramatic population increase would later haunt Mohammed Reza.

As girls were able to take advantage of the Literacy Corps program, the effect on educating the female population was not without flaws. The immediate impact of the inclusion of females in the Education Corps program adversely affected the education of females within the cities. Despite the fact that village girls were now allowed to participate, the existence of female schools was still not as prevalent as the male schools. In fact, the preponderance of female graduates in the Literacy Corps ultimately reduced the number of female educators that were qualified to teach girls in the urban areas. This reduction made it seem as if the regime was more concerned about eradicating illiteracy throughout the entire country, than they were ensuring that females were properly educated in the urban environment. An educated female student would play a more active role in helping the country achieve its goals, than a girl from the countryside. This demonstrated one of the problems with the program.

Another key issue that plagued the Literacy Corps program was that it caused an increase in the migration of peasants to the cities. In the past, all of the opportunities for the

peasants remained in the countryside. However, as the illiteracy rate diminished and an increasing number of peasants became educated, they sought a better life for both themselves and their families. Given that the more lucrative jobs were in the major cities of Iran, many of the peasants left the countryside and migrated¹²⁸ to places like Tehran, Tabriz, and Shiraz, making city life more difficult:

As literacy increased, so too did the rate of migration from the land to the cities. Agricultural workers constituted 90 percent of the total labor force in 1900, 75 percent in 1946, 46 percent in 1966. By 1972, they were less than 40 percent. This massive influx of people into the cities caused an acute housing shortage and the appearance in south Tehran of shanty towns that rapidly became slums¹²⁹.

It is important to note that the significant increase in the migration of peasants from the countryside to the cities shows the success that the Shah's Literacy Corps program achieved. As Mohammed Reza continued to pursue his desire to make the Iranian people more literate, he inadvertently made life more difficult for himself. The overcrowding of the cities made transportation unbearable and living accommodations scarce. Despite the fact that Mohammed Reza may not have fully realized how increasing the rate of literacy would affect his country prior to making it one of his key objectives, he believed that he was helping his people, and he was comfortable with this notion. The Shah felt that through education, Iran would achieve greatness. This was one of the reasons why the Shah held firm to his desire to eliminate the overwhelming number of illiterate Iranians.

¹²⁸ Roger M. Savory, "Social Development During the Pahlavi Era".

¹²⁹ Ibid., 112.

In a letter from Mohammed Reza to U.S. President Lyndon Johnson in 1966, the Shah spoke of just how well the program was working and the successes that had resulted: “These young men...carry out their allotted duties with great devotion and play a constructive role in the improvement of social and economic conditions in the rural areas. They have proved to be a transmission vehicle for bringing leadership, guidance, and badly needed services and skills to the remotest areas of our land”¹³⁰. The success of the Literacy Corps proved to help achieve success throughout different stages of the modernizing process.

As the Literacy Corps program continued to prosper, the government decided that it was again time to expand the organization beyond its intended purpose. Given the success that the teachers had in decreasing illiteracy in the villages, the Shah decided to assist those adults in the countryside who were eager to learn to read. Through the expansion of the program to the elder members of the community, the hope was that these parents would instill the importance of education onto their offspring, as well as contribute to the future of the villages in a positive manner. While the Literacy Corps program reached significantly more children than adults, it was able to teach some middle-aged Iranians to read. Had it not been for the Shah’s program, the older village members would never have had the opportunity of being taught to read. The increasing number of villagers that the Shah’s program was able to reach altered the way that they viewed the Shah. The sheer success of the program in numbers was staggering: “The results were spectacular: the number of pupils in Literacy Corps schools increased by 692 percent in 15 years (see Appendix B for percentage increases)”¹³¹. During the

¹³⁰ Foreign Relations of the United States, March 25, 1966. Vol. 22, 1964-1968, Iran: Document 126, 224-225.

¹³¹ Pahlavi, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 114.

first five years alone, 510,000 boys, 128,000 girls, 250,000 men and 12,000 women attended classes organized in the villages”¹³². Overall, from 1963-1978, “the total number of Iranian students increased from 1.5 million in 1963 to more than 10 million in 1978. Credit for this achievement belongs largely to the Literacy Corps, which did more than just instruct. It instilled a thirst for knowledge”¹³³. However, despite these successes and the enormous percentage of the population that lived in the rural areas within Iran, these individuals would not play a pivotal role in the revolution that would transpire some 15 years later. Instead, many of them would sit idly by and await the outcome. This was just another example of the Shah’s misfortune.

Countryside to City: A Movement that Plagued Mohammed Reza

A decisive element in the educational scene that factored into the Shah’s fall was the massive influx of Iranians from the countryside to the cities. As indicated earlier, an increase in urban migration was partially attributed to the increase in the literacy rate within the countryside. However, this was not the only reason for the villagers to come to the city looking for what they believed would be a life filled with greater opportunities. While the land reform policy of the Shah, during the White Revolution, had impacted the lives of many Iranians living in the countryside in a positive manner, it did not benefit the entire rural population. In fact, for some, it intensified the hardships that they faced:

The agricultural laborers and village proletariat, who had previously enjoyed no cultivating rights, were left out of the plan. This not only exacerbated the existing intraclass tensions between the two groups, but also resulted in a rapid deterioration of

¹³² Ibid., 113.

¹³³ Ibid., 114.

economic life of the already dispossessed agricultural proletariat. The basic land-reform law did nothing to improve living conditions of the agricultural laborers. In the words of Nikki Keddie, the laboring class was 'given no protection—no minimum wage, no unemployment relief, no gleaning rights on the now-private fields, and no land'. Steady employment, which had always been difficult to obtain, became well nigh (sic) impossible under new land distribution arrangements. The new peasant cultivators, in contrast to the former landlords, preferred using their own family labor rather than hiring outside agricultural workers. Moreover, the spread of agricultural mechanization, which was designed to increase labor productivity, had the inevitable side effect of reducing the number of villagers needed for farm work¹³⁴.

While the Shah's land reform policy did impact some negatively, overall, it was a success.

However, those who were affected the most were forced to look elsewhere for work. Thus, they migrated to the cities. Coupled with the misfortune of not being able to find work was the increased usage of machinery to do work that was previously required by manual laborers. As times grew difficult for those in the countryside, the migrations continued to become more heavily concentrated.

With each passing day, the number of migrants to the cities increased and the problems that transpired continued to escalate. The individuals who came to the cities were hoping for a better life, but the growing population made this difficult: "In large part an outgrowth of the White Revolution...of 1963, urbanization proceeded unhampered, with Iran's urban sector more than doubling in population between the years 1960 and 1975. Tehran alone grew from 2 to over 4 million people from 1966 to 1976 with public transportation, housing, and schools growing at a much slower pace"¹³⁵. The massive population influx created a stress on the industries that had adequately supported those living in the cities. While the living standards in

¹³⁴ Farhad Kazemi, "Urban Migrants and the Revolution." *Iranian Studies* 13, No. 1-4 (1980) : 259.

¹³⁵ Jerrold D. Green, "Pseudoparticipation and Countermobilization: Roots of the Iranian Revolution," *Iranian Studies* 13, No. 1-4 (1980) : 34-35.

the cities had always been better than those in the countryside, the overcrowding in the cities was now altering this perception. According to Bill Coughlin, who lived in and travelled throughout Iran from 1970-1974 with his work for John Deere, “there were lots of contradictions in Iran. On one street you would find the nicest homes, while one block over, you would see several shanty looking houses”¹³⁶. The overcrowding of the cities was making life very difficult for many Iranians.

As far as inner city education was concerned, the urban schools were not properly suited for the droves of people that came to the cities: “School enrollments were increasing, but the number of children flocking to the schools placed a severe strain on the capacity of a system that only a few years earlier had accommodated but a small proportion of the school-age population”¹³⁷. The inability of the schools to accommodate the growing population of the cities made it difficult for the educational sector. As a result, the burden fell on the shoulders of Mohammed Reza to create an environment conducive to learning and allow each and every student who desired to attend school, to do so. Caught in a quagmire, the Shah would do everything possible to help his people. He believed that his people looked to him for guidance, but did not fully appreciate the growing influence of the religious establishment.

¹³⁶ Bill Coughlin, Interview Conducted on 8/25/2010 in Lawrence, KS.

¹³⁷ David S. McMorris, “Demographic Setting and Education,” in *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop (Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1978), 69.

Education Financing and Problems within the System

Financial Trouble Contributes to the Shah's Fall

While there are discrepancies over the Shah's response to the problems facing him regarding education in Iran, it appears that he did what he could to ensure that his people were educated. According to Jerrold Green¹³⁸, Mohammed Reza did not positively respond to the issues that arose: "Proportionally, national expenditures for education consistently declined, and by 1970 Iran spent only 2.5 percent of its GNP on education, not only less than wealthy oil producers such as Iraq and Kuwait, but even less than poor states such as Sudan and Egypt"¹³⁹. Contrary to Green's assertion was the statistical figures of the time according to James A. Bill. When looking at the number of students who were enrolled in higher educational programs from 1922 to 1963-1964, we see a substantial increase, much of which can be attributed to the unrelenting determination of both Reza Shah and Mohammed Reza (see Appendix C)¹⁴⁰. The evidence presented by Bill contradicts Green's assertions in the sense that an increase in school enrollment is not quantifiable by a decrease in expenditures for education. Based on the insufficient number of students that plagued higher learning, any increase is indicative of a rise in expenditures for the educational program. Without the fortitude of the Shah to implement such measures, the Iranian educational system would have suffered immensely. Instead, it was hindered by an inability to provide for the growing number of Iranians into the system. It was not a lack of finances that altered the success of the program, but the inability to maintain the

¹³⁸ Jerrold Green is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan.

¹³⁹ Jerrold D. Green, "Pseudoparticipation and Countermobilization", 35.

¹⁴⁰ James A. Bill, "The Politics of Student Alienation: The Case of Iran." *Iranian Studies* 2, No. 1 (Winter, 1969) : 10.

necessary level of resources needed to alleviate the situation. Mohammed Reza achieved great success with what resources he had at his disposal, however, his successes were not enough.

As time elapsed, the Shah understood the enormous strain that was placed upon his people regarding education. Mohammed Reza looked to better the Iranian people through this means, but struggled to do so. As a result, the Shah enlisted the support of the government to participate in an expansion to meet the needs of the people. In an attempt to placate the people, the Shah looked to the Ministry of Education to help relieve the educational problems that the country faced.

Mohammed Reza was not going to allow for the strain that developed in the cities to inhibit him from providing his people with the necessary resources to succeed. However, while, unintended, those that suffered the most were the middle class. With the assistance of the Ministry of Education, the government proposed a change in the manner in which education was disseminated to the people. The current educational system was growing increasingly outdated, as was its intended purpose, which was: “chiefly aimed at the training of civil servants for the then newly-established ministries and government departments, replacing the old government staff members of a traditionally-based administrative system”¹⁴¹. Given that the current system had not changed for more than 80 years, it was necessary for the government to keep up with the advances in technology and Mohammed Reza’s growing desire to increase the aptitude of his people. A modification to the educational system was needed. As a result, at a 1964 conference, a change was made:

¹⁴¹ Ali Pour-Moghaddas, “Higher Education and Development in Iran” : 370.

The new objectives...were twofold: the universalization of primary and part of secondary education and a re-ordering of priorities in favour (sic) of technical education. A new scheme, revolutionizing the entire educational system, was put forward for the implementation of these objectives. It sought to change the former 6-3-3 year pattern of primary and secondary education into a new pattern of 5-3-3-1 or 5-3-3 years, the first eight of which were declared free and compulsory; free nourishment was to be provided for children while at school so that poverty might in no way prove an obstacle to education...With the new scheme, replacing as it does an 'aristocratic' system with a universal system of education at the lower level and a meritocratic system of education at a higher level, it is hoped that many of the existing problems of the system can be solved and that the screening process which selects students for higher education can be put into operation at an earlier stage¹⁴².

Not only was Mohammed Reza looking to broaden the horizons of those who may not otherwise have had the means to attend school, through the enactment of free and compulsory education through the first eight years, but also sought to change flaws that had arisen under the previous educational system. Mohammed Reza desired to expand the knowledge of his people through education. He hoped that support for his regime would increase as he provided his people with the means to achieve more success. However, this was not the case. Some problems that were unforeseen and unaccounted for arose that widened the fissure between Mohammed Reza and his people.

To further aggravate the rift that had developed between the Shah and his people was the economic problems that the country was beginning to face. In 1975, a drop of 12.2 percent in oil was beginning to take its toll and bring about economic and social stresses in Iran¹⁴³. By the late 1970's, according to Fereydoun Hoveyda, who served as the Shah's Ambassador to the United Nations, the difficulties within the country were swiftly increasing: "The high cost of

¹⁴² Ibid., 370-371.

¹⁴³ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002).

living, the often exorbitant profit margins of Iranian enterprises, and widespread fiscal fraud – all these were enriching the ‘new’ upper middle class at the expense of the lower middle and working classes....To the ordinary Iranian, the deterioration of the economy in his daily life meant frequent power cuts, food shortages and the growth of the black market”¹⁴⁴. The social and economic stresses that were brought about by a decline in the economy culminated in 1978 through a series of demonstrations that were organized by Khomeini. In Qum, Khomeini and his counterparts encouraged the students of the madrassas and the impoverished Iranian youths to come out in protest to show their disdain for the monarchy. Many of these individuals ended up becoming martyrs, as Mohammed Reza unleashed the police to rein in the demonstrators. As a means to compensate the families of those killed, Khomeini and his religious counterparts turned to the bazaar guilds to raise money for the families¹⁴⁵. Cashing in on the economic and social problems facing Iran, the religious establishment used this as a key element to help foster the growing hatred of the Shah. These measures would actively contribute to his fall and the further struggles that Mohammed Reza would face.

Budgetary Concerns: Inhibiting the Shah’s Ability to Thrive

As the revolution progressed, Mohammed Reza’s power declined. Despite the sustained budget increases in education, the Shah could not seem to ensure that the goals that he hoped to obtain came to fruition. According to data concerning the Iranian budget, the educational system saw a substantial increase in their budget throughout the Shah’s reign (see

¹⁴⁴ Fereydoun Hoveyda, *The Fall of the Shah* (New York: Wyndham Books, 1979), 101-102.

¹⁴⁵ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad*.

Appendix D)¹⁴⁶. While the government continued to pour money into education, the results did not follow. In fact, according to James A. Bill, by 1977, the Iranian educational system was not doing well: “A 1977 study of the Iranian educational system carried out by the Imperial Inspectorate documented the deplorable state of the field, pointing to severe shortages of teachers, the basic lack of facilities and the extremely low academic standards that characterize all levels of education in Iran”¹⁴⁷. The majority of the problems with the educational system at this juncture were attributable to the enormously growing population throughout the country, because of declining death rates and the population growth of the urban areas. The educational system was not able to keep up with this growing population. As a result, the revolution spread to include both the students and teachers of secondary schools. While the demonstrations that they engaged in were not always violent, they did help shut down the bazaars, battled the SAVAK in the streets, and would come to the streets following the school day to demonstrate in some capacity¹⁴⁸. At this stage, the Shah, who had previously not hesitated to use the SAVAK to quell dissent, became increasingly reluctant to use his security force to put down insurrection. It could have been the result of the Shah’s weakened state, as a result of the advancement of his lymphoma, or the realization that the end was near. Despite the troubled times, the Shah was not yet ready to concede.

¹⁴⁶ Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 114.

¹⁴⁷ James A. Bill, “Iran and the Crisis of ’78,” *Foreign Affairs* 57, no.2 (Winter 1978) : 331.

¹⁴⁸ Ahmad Ashraf and Ali Banuazizi, “The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution,” *State, Culture, and Society* 1, No. 3 (Spring, 1985) : 3-40.

Overcrowding and Anger

With the continued abundance of school aged children in the fold, it was necessary for the institutions of higher learning to function impeccably. In essence, these institutions would provide the means necessary to train those who sought to better their standing within society.

For an Iranian:

An institution of higher education is defined in Iran as one which confers an undergraduate and/or graduate degree. The higher education system, as it exists, comprises nineteen universities and fifty-one colleges and postsecondary institutions....As a result of a Royal Firman, issued in September 1975, all postsecondary as well as secondary schools in Iran are now supported by government funds. Before that, however, universities were generally divided into two categories—government and non-government....Strictly speaking, there are no private institutions of higher education still in existence in Iran. However, few institutions come under special status and remain more or less independent of government control¹⁴⁹.

The establishment of private and state-funded universities and colleges occurred as the necessity of institutions of higher learning increased. However, to get all schools on the same system and to maximize their benefit to the government, all schools had to fall under government control. Although the number of institutions of higher education increased, they were still unable to keep up with the growing number of students ready to attend universities. There just were not enough seats available.

As Mohammed Reza began to demand more from the educational institutions throughout the country, it was necessary to enter into a phase of expansion. Up until this point an increase in the number of institutions of higher learning was not deemed necessary. With the first eight years of schooling both gratis and compulsory, the government was unable to

¹⁴⁹ Samii, Vaghefi, Nowrasteh, *Systems of Higher Education*, 6.

ensure that there would be enough room available for all who wanted to continue their education. The impact of these changes warranted expansion:

These pressures for entrance to facilities of higher education within Iran mount annually, for the number of secondary school students is growing faster than the number of places in the universities and colleges....But if a university degree is a requisite for mobility to the higher levels of the civil and military bureaucracies and such a degree is so difficult to acquire, Iranian students are induced to compromise their educational standards in a number of ways. One is that applicants tend to seek admission to any faculty of the University whose entrance examination they can pass, irrespective of their intellectual or career interests¹⁵⁰.

The predicament of students increased their angst for the monarchy. The governments' requirement that all children attend school at a young age, while not having the necessary capabilities to allow for those individuals who sought to obtain a university degree, was something that drove many students toward Khomeini. It was extremely frustrating for those Iranian students who had devoted so much of their time and energy to obtaining a coveted university degree, and then not being able to do so due to problems within the government. While the Shah had not intended for this to occur, his government's failure to ensure that continuing education was available to all, ultimately hindered the monarch's ability to maintain control.

Further dissatisfaction with the Shah came in response to his limiting the number of students that were able to study abroad in 1967. While the government encouraged university students to study abroad for years, dating back to the 1930's, the new Pahlavi regime began to see a troubling pattern that had to be addressed:

¹⁵⁰ Marvin Zonis, "Educational Ambivalence in Iran," *Iranian Studies* 1, No. 4 (1968) : 146.

On a per capita basis, Iran is in the first rank, with India, Japan, and Canada, of countries 'exporting' students. But the penalty for Iran's maintaining this community of fledging scholars outside its boundaries—now said to number some 30,000 persons—is enormous. A majority of them are irreparably lost to their homeland. It has been estimated that a minimum of sixty percent of these students abroad never return to settle in Iran, a figure approaching 80-90% in certain disciplines....In the summer of 1967, a new law passed the Parliament restricting study abroad, after mid-1967, to only those who had completed their military service¹⁵¹.

Not only was the government suffering due to the number of individuals remaining abroad, but the people were as well. The medical profession was one of the most affected disciplines. As a result, this placed a considerable strain on the medical industry. A growing population and a dwindling number of doctors made times difficult within Iran. With many Iranians living longer lives, this problem increased the frustration that many felt toward the regime as doctors became less accessible. To further exacerbate this problem, the Shah looked to the SAVAK to assist in his attempt to bring the foreign dissidents home.

The problems that continued to manifest within the educational system brought about a sense of urgency within the government to expand the systems of higher education. The main factors that served as an impetus for this expansion were:

Far-reaching changes in the structure of Iranian society (including the growth of the middle classes and increased social mobility), have revolutionized educational aspirations. 'To get a better job, get a better education', is the rule everywhere in the country today. Secondly, there is the rapidly growing demand for highly-trained manpower, coupled with the increasing importance which the society as a whole attaches to specialists of all kinds of levels. A third reason stems from the failure of institutions of higher education in general to supply adequate numbers of specialists at the vacant posts, for which very high salaries and bonuses have been offered, thus tempting students to obtain higher skills and qualifications. The fact that in addition

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 147-148.

government departments and many employers will offer certain jobs only to graduates may also be said to contribute to demands for higher education¹⁵².

Had the government lowered the standards for employment, some of the problems within Iranian society may have subsided. Instead, the government chose to spend additional money on the establishment of new institutions. If Mohammed Reza had utilized the oil revenue to create more jobs and diminish urban hardships, he may have put himself in a better position to remain in power.

Consequences of Educational Problems

Increased Number of Students

The failure of the regime to provide the necessary supply and demand for education was the main cause for the increased number of institutions of higher learning. The acceptance of the government to allow for private institutions to open within Iran lessened the burden on the government to some degree. However, with this, the government was not able to control the private institutions course of study. While there were many areas that needed improvement, none had suffered more than the medical field:

The need for medical and health care personnel is especially great. There are only 10,800 doctors for the entire population, and the situation is even worse with respect to nurses and dentists: there are 5,200 nurses and 4,600 dentists for the whole country. Furthermore, the geographical distribution of doctors and health care personnel is extremely uneven: in north Tehran, there is one doctor for 200 to 250 people; in Kurdistan province, however, there is only one doctor for 15,000 people....In response to this issue, the Department of Community Medicine conducted a five-year study which

¹⁵² Ali Pour-Moghaddas, "Higher Education and Development in Iran," 373.

revealed that students with three to four years of medical training could accurately diagnose and treat most diseases¹⁵³.

The necessity of the government to have to settle for inadequately trained medical students to help protect the country was something that the Shah could have averted. Had the Shah not allowed the SAVAK to interfere in the lives of Iranians, many medical graduates may have stayed in the country: "About 80 per cent of Iranian medical graduates, particularly graduates of the Universities of Tehran and Pahlavi, have been leaving the country each year"¹⁵⁴. To further exacerbate this problem, Tehran University was the most prestigious university within the country, meaning that many of the most highly skilled doctors were leaving.

Despite the advances that were initiated under his father's rule, "Reza Shah's reforms provided the social, educational, and psychological foundation for a progressive, self-governing society. It is doubtful whether any of the developments in Iran from 1941 to present day could have taken place if the country had not first passed through the mill of his revolution"¹⁵⁵.

Mohammed Reza continued to deal with an array of issues concerning the educational system. As early as 1961, Mohammed Reza got a sense that many of those who were sent abroad for education were not going to return. Much of this was attributed to the fact that Iran had recently begun to make a strong push to modernize the country, and jobs and opportunities remained limited. While some of those who studied in the U.S. ended up marrying American women, others found that they could find better paying jobs in the United States and decided to stay. While this was true, Mohammed Reza also believed that the inefficiencies of his newly

¹⁵³ Samii, Vaghefi, Nowrasteh, *Systems of Higher Education: Iran*, 18.

¹⁵⁴ Ali Pour-Moghaddas, "Higher Education and Development in Iran," 374.

¹⁵⁵ L. P. Elwell-Sutton, "Reza Shah the Great: Founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty," in *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 47.

developed society also factored into the decisions of some to remain abroad. Despite having a society that is highly developed, as some of those who remained in the U.S. would later come to find out, the U.S. also had its own inefficiencies and other problems when it came to government and jobs¹⁵⁶. Nonetheless, many Iranians believed that they could live a better life in the United States, and elected not to return home.

Limited Number of Seats Available Angers Students

Limited space was one of the most noteworthy reasons that necessitated an expansion to the system of higher education. Given that the number of available seats for the growing number of applicants was limited, the government sought to devise a means that would allow for a substantial increase in the capacity of higher education. From the years 1963-1966, the number of applicants, versus the number of those accepted to the institutions of higher learning, were troubling (see Appendix D)¹⁵⁷. Through these numbers, we can see that there is a significant disparity between the number of applicants and those that were accepted. This discrepancy quantifies the problem that the Pahlavi regime faced, considering higher education. According to the International Council for Educational Development, the Shah's government was having a tremendous time trying to perfect the problems that the educational system faced: "For example, in 1968 there were 48,000 students seeking admission to universities and only 17,000 seats were available; by 1975 the government universities in Iran were only able to admit 10 percent of the total number of students who applied"¹⁵⁸. The inability of the Iranian government to provide higher education to those who were interested

¹⁵⁶ Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, *Mission For My Country* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961).

¹⁵⁷ James A. Bill, "The Politics of Student Alienation", 13.

¹⁵⁸ Samii, Vaghefi, Nowrasteh, *Systems of Higher Education*, 14.

led the government to look for measures that they could take to change the current system.

Despite a failed attempt at reform to the admission process in 1968, the government pressed on to find an answer to this problem.

Mohammed Reza had already invested an enormous amount of time into trying to perfect the educational system, but was not having much success. In an attempt to expand the field and entice more Iranians to enter the educational field, the Shah looked to narrow the pay gap between educators and those in other professions:

The growth of the school system with its big administrative overhead was reflected in the steadily growing budgetary allocations, which showed substantial increase in the 1970s. In that period more attention began to be paid to teachers' salaries, previously very low but gradually improving. In the 1960s and 1970s the old disparity between salaries in Iran and those that Iranians could secure if they stayed abroad appeared to be gradually vanishing. Similarly, the pay difference between Iranians and foreigners working in Iran was being narrowed down. Bitter feelings had been aroused in the past when a graduate returning from his studies abroad received only a fraction of the salary that was paid to his European or American colleagues employed in comparable positions in Iran¹⁵⁹.

While the educators in Iran were beginning to earn more, the continued state of the educational system remained in question. As the government was actively recruiting teachers, they were not succeeding in making many strides as far as the overall picture of the higher educational system. The people of Iran deserved more. The Shah recognized this fact, but the anger amongst the students and the growing influence of the religious establishment were beginning to become overwhelming.

¹⁵⁹ Wilhelm Eilers, (1978). "Educational and Cultural Development in Iran During the Pahlavi Era," in *Iran Under the Pahlavis* ed. George Lenczowski (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 318.

The problems that plagued the educational system caused the Shah to look elsewhere to provide the manpower for the expansive modernization projects that he had undertaken.

The adjustments that were needed to bolster the Shah's projects were staggering:

The severity of the manpower shortages is clearly evident...By 1978, Iran will need 2,990 percent more secondary school teachers, 1,122.2 percent more metallurgical engineers, and 660 percent more chemical technicians. For the majority of the remaining professional fields, the projected 1978 need is well over 100 percent. Because technicians and skilled manpower comprise only 4.6 percent of the labor force in Iran—as compared to 8.6 percent in the United States and 10 percent in Canada—the government has imported foreign professional and technicians. In 1970, there were approximately 9,557 foreign experts and technicians employed in Iran; this figure has now (1978) jumped to 55,000 and continues to increase¹⁶⁰.

As a result of the governments' inability to provide the education for the growing number of skilled professionals needed to help the modernization process, the Shah was forced to look to the West for assistance. However, his desire to bring foreign workers into the country drew the ire of many Iranians, most notably from the religious establishment. This gesture led the Iranian people to believe that they were not qualified enough for the Shah and did not possess the necessary skills to assist in the modernization process throughout the country.

Effects of Middle Class Growth

Given the immense growth of the middle class, it was extremely difficult for the Iranian people to understand why the Shah was bringing foreign advisers into the country to fill certain jobs. This group was the fastest growing and greatest threat to the Shah's regime, but he did not do enough to pacify the members of the middle class:

But, in the end, the educated, professional middle class is the greatest danger to the 2,500 year-old absolute monarchy of Iran. The opposition forces on the extreme Left

¹⁶⁰ Samii, , Vaghefi, Nowrasteh, *Systems of Higher Education*, 17-18.

and Right can perhaps be controlled and placated, but such is not the case with the educated middle class. Iranian census data indicate that this class has doubled in size between 1956 and 1976, leaping from six percent to 13 percent of the total employed population, and as more and more Iranians acquire modern higher education either at home or abroad, this class will continue to swell in size. When the merchants and businessmen are brought into the calculations, the middle classes in Iran now make up over 25 percent of the population—a very large middle sector for any developing society¹⁶¹.

The expansion of the middle class coupled with the religious establishment made life very difficult for the Shah. Despite the fact that Mohammed Reza intended to provide more for his country through modernization, he alienated the strongest class within Iranian society, the middle class. This unintended failure played a significant role in the Shah's fall from power.

Another significant factor which angered the middle class was the maldistribution of wealth within Iranian society. With little assistance being provided to the middle class by the government in the way of higher education, these individuals grew increasingly anti-Shah as the disparity between the rich and the other classes widened:

The task of the opposition was made easier by the great inequality of wealth in the country. Available statistical evidence points to a society on a pace of increasing maldistribution of wealth. In 1973-4 in the urban areas, the highest 10 percent of households accounted for 37.9 percent of total expenditure, while the lowest 10 percent accounted for only 1.3 percent. Inequality of income was most pronounced in Tehran where in 1974, 60 percent of the city's total income was distributed among the top 20 percent income group. The opposition did not need statistical evidence to prove the growing impoverishment of the many for the benefit of the few. The extreme concentration of wealth in a small group was amply demonstrated by the monied class's conspicuous consumption and eager display of opulence. It was particularly difficult to justify or rationalize the maldistribution of resources in the wake of the oil boom of the post-1973 period and the expectations that it had raised among the population¹⁶².

¹⁶¹ James A. Bill, "Iran and the Crisis of '78", 333.

¹⁶² Farhad Kazemi, "Urban Migrants and the Revolution", 268.

The government's inability to rectify the higher educational system brought about problems for the regime. While the oil revenue allowed for the Shah to spend money freely, he did so at a rate that was far too rapid. As a result, inflation and unemployment plagued the country and brought about a further sense of dissatisfaction with the Pahlavi regime. The Shah was a man that looked to assist his country, but fell short of this goal as he looked to do too much, too quickly.

The Misuse of the SAVAK

As dissent grew, the Shah feared that his people would turn on him. Therefore, he believed that he needed to employ the harsh techniques of the SAVAK in order to remain in power and effectively lead his country. One key element that played into the fear of those who had left, returning home was documented by Amnesty International: "The Shah of Iran admitted in an October CBS-TV interview with Mike Wallace that there are indeed SAVAK agents spying on Iranians in this country. According to reports by Amnesty International, a London-based organization that monitors political imprisonment worldwide, dissident Iranian students living abroad are subject to imprisonment and torture when they return home"¹⁶³. The fear of returning home was another reason why many of the foreign educated Iranians did not return to Iran. While the Shah had tried to re-recruit certain individuals, and offer higher pay to foreign graduates, it was too little, too late.

A second manner that the SAVAK hindered education was through their constant presence in university life. In an attempt to ensure that the young, Iranian students were not

¹⁶³ Ronald Henkoff, "Do Oil and Education Mix?: The Middle East Connection," *Change* 9, No. 6 (1977) : 26.

plotting against the Shah, he employed the SAVAK to mix in among the students at many of the domestic universities. The policing of the SAVAK hindered the educational experiences for students and teachers alike:

For those who were admitted, university life often was a frustrating experience. Professors were subject to SAVAK security checks to insure that their 'political credentials' were in order. Such repression excluded many of Iran's most talented scholars from active participation in university life and created an intellectual atmosphere marked by timidity and pervaded by a fear of secret-police intervention. It was assumed that classes were populated by one or more SAVAK 'representatives,' ready to inform on their professors and fellow students at the slightest breach of acceptable political behavior¹⁶⁴.

While the Shah was utilizing the SAVAK as a means to stay in power, he was ultimately contributing to his own demise. This infringement on the university students fueled their desire to stand up to the regime that had succeeded at limiting their freedoms and making their lives more difficult. This is well illustrated through the work of Gilles Kepel, (professor of Middle East Studies, Institute for Political Studies, Paris, France):

The monarchy and Savak (secret police) had muzzled debate on the regime's policies; the imperial system that had encouraged the growth of an educated urban middle class, through a system of schools substantially superior to those of Iran's neighbors, denied that class any semblance of political voice....The absence of free speech and a free press inhibited the development of a democratic culture in Iran....The vacuum created by the absence of democratic institutions provided a space for radical sentiment to grow¹⁶⁵.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that when the tide of events within Iran began to head south, the students were there to play a major role, and the religious establishment was determined to use this to their advantage.

¹⁶⁴ Jerrold D. Green, "Pseudoparticipation and Countermobilization," 36.

¹⁶⁵ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad*, 107.

Anger Among the Students

As a result of a troubled educational system, the students who were spurned by the government looked to another source for strength. This source of strength came in the form of the Iranian religious establishment, which was gaining a disproportionate amount of power in the waning years of the Shah's rule. Khomeini's continued denouncement of the Shah struck a chord of discontent among many Iranian students. Already angered by the Shah's actions, many students looked to the Shia cleric for guidance. They were influenced by his revolutionary rhetoric and his promise to change the country into a democratic government. Although this would later prove untrue, the students had already fallen into the hands of Khomeini. He was about to use his influence to incite a revolution.

Once the Iranian revolution began to take shape in late 1977, it was many of those within the educational field who were among the most active participants. While the students played a significant role, they were not the only ones within the educational field who participated in the revolution. According to Ahmad Ashraf and Ali Banuazizi, the young intelligentsia (students and teachers) played an active role in the movement that brought about the fall of the Pahlavi regime:

University students, some intellectuals, poets, writers, and human rights activists were the first segment of the intelligentsia to openly challenge the regime....Over the entire course of the revolution...the young intelligentsia...participated more actively than any other social group in every form of protest and revolutionary activity from peaceful marches, to strikes, to guerilla warfare and armed insurrection. Relative to their size in the population, more members of this group were arrested, wounded, or killed than any

other group. Finally, through their active participation in the revolutionary committees, they helped bring about the state of dual sovereignty¹⁶⁶.

As the intelligentsia demonstrated that they were going to become active participants in the revolution, their level of participation did not go without enticement from Khomeini. Khomeini promised the intelligentsia something that they previously had not had, the opportunity to play an active role in the future of Iran:

He enticed the student to his cause by offering them a viable and active role in the Islamic revolution. During his...Najaf talk, in addressing the intelligentsia, he said: 'They [the intelligentsia] should not push aside the clergy who backed by the masses...and say, We want Islam without clerics. It is like saying that we want an Islam without politics. This goes against reason. Islam without clerics is totally impossible. Every mullah is influential in his own quarter, but you do not have such influence...The people want the clergy...If a cleric is not sufficiently versed in political matters...give him information...so that he can act, and people would follow his lead, and things would get done'¹⁶⁷.

With the deliverance of the Najaf talk, Khomeini called upon the intelligentsia to talk to the clergy and tell them exactly what views they believed were imperative to govern Iran.

Khomeini's ability to appeal to this group provided him with the impetus to push his movement. He told his followers that he desired to establish a democratic Islamic state.

However, Khomeini was well aware of the fact that a democracy would not work in Iran, or any other Middle Eastern country. According to the words of Seyyed Qutb, one of the most influential Islamic fundamentalists, democracy was not possible in Middle Eastern lands: "Islam is a declaration of the freedom of man from servitude to other men. Thus it strives from the beginning to abolish all those systems and governments which are based on the rule of man over men and the servitude of one human being to another"¹⁶⁸. Khomeini held the same

¹⁶⁶ Ahmad Ashraf and Ali Banuazizi, "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution" : 26.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 32.

¹⁶⁸ Seyyed Qutb, *Milestones* (Damascus, Syria: Kazi Publications, 2007), 61.

beliefs as those of Qutb in regards to government and the religion of Islam. However, Khomeini's ability to falsely portray his intentions was what encouraged many Iranians.

In his vocalization of the future of Iran, the people would have the ability to elect those who they felt were most deserving. However, Khomeini had ulterior motives. He was using his ability to garner support among the intelligentsia to establish a new country, ruled by Islam, with an iron clad fist. Khomeini duped the Iranian people into believing that they would have an influence on a government that sought to establish Shariah law throughout the country. While this was not apparent at the beginning, it became clear after Khomeini's return to his country. The Shah's abdication of the throne was something that the people wanted, especially those who made up the intelligentsia. However, some would later regret their decision to believe the rhetoric of Khomeini. This feeling of betrayal was effectively stated through the words of Nobel Peace Prize winning author, and former Iranian judge, Shirin Ebadi:

The imposition of the Islamic penal code, inspired by Islamic law, is a momentous overhaul in how a society is governed. It would fundamentally transform the very basis of governance, the relationship of citizens to laws, the organizing principles and social contracts along which society is concerned....The drafters of the penal code had apparently consulted the seventh century for legal advice. The laws, in short, turned the clock back fourteen hundred years, to the early days of Islam's spread, the days when stoning women for adultery and chopping off the hands of thieves were considered appropriate sentences...it was becoming apparent to educated Iranians that the revolution was veering in a vicious direction. Not only were the sympathies that had brought us out into the streets absent in many of the revolutionary processes under way, but there was an appetite for violence that seemed only to grow¹⁶⁹.

Once the revolution had already begun, the people of Iran began to grow weary of their future.

Although they feared that the new Islamic regime would accentuate the problems within

¹⁶⁹ Shirin Ebadi, *Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope* (New York: Random House, 2006), 51.

Iranian society, it was too late to turn back. The Shah was gone and the new, more vicious regime of Khomeini was continuing to take form.

Failure to Reform and the Fall of the Shah

A final reason why the Shah was not able to stay in power was, most notably, his inability to push reforms that benefitted the whole of Iranian society. As we have seen, the overspending by the Shah on the military created extreme problems for the monarch. Instead of placating the people and spending the country's oil revenue on things that would benefit the entire population, the Shah kept Iran's tremendous wealth close to his breast and used it to solidify his rule. As the middle and lower classes continued to suffer, the religious establishment used this to their advantage and appealed to those who were afflicted, through their denunciation of the Shah. While Mohammed Reza had made a conscious effort to better his people through education, this backfired on him. Many of those who studied abroad refused to come back to the suppressed life that they had lived under before obtaining their education in the West. Given that many of the highly educated Iranians refused to return, the country struggled to provide the necessary services to the populace. Further, those who did choose to return to the Shah's Iran realized that through their experience in the West, torture and censorship of the media were not customary. This paved the way for both the religious teachers and clerics to assert their influence on the frustrated Iranians. It was the inability of the Shah to appease educated Iranians that was an important factor in his fall from power. Had Mohammed Reza Pahlavi maintained the support of the students, he might have been able to

maintain power and pacify the Iranian people. His inability to provide for *all* his people significantly contributed to his fall.

Sitting atop the Peacock throne for 37 years Mohammed Reza had a great deal of success. He was able to modernize Iran and make it a player in global affairs. However, despite his successes, there were also failures. One of the most notable was his inability to effectively advance the state and quality of the Iranian educational system. While the Shah opened more institutions of higher learning, they were unable to keep up with the growing demand of the population. The Shah's Literacy Corps was responsible for much of this problem. While the Shah provided those in the countryside with the means to learn, this contributed to the problem of overcrowding in the cities and insufficient space in the universities. Had it not been for Mohammed Reza, Iran would not have achieved as much as they did academically. However, the country could have achieved more if things were done differently. Mohammed Reza worked hard to advance the state of the educational system in Iran, but was unable to reach his ultimate goal, improved education and total success in modernization. This contributed to Mohammed Reza's demise.



**(Statue of the Shah being torn down by University students on January 16, 1979: Courtesy
iransportspress.com)**

Conclusion

In the Middle East, 1979 was a watershed year. The Iranian revolution triggered a series of events that had a tremendous impact on both the region and the world. This revolution opened the door for the Soviets to invade Afghanistan, led to a war between Iran and its neighbor, Iraq, brought about a fanatical leader in the Ayatollah Khomeini, and gave way to one of the first terrorist organizations in Hezbollah. Further, this event bolstered Saddam Hussein's power in the Middle East, which led to two different wars with the U.S. As a result, the U.S. took on a more active role in the region through the stationing of American soldiers in many Middle Eastern countries, most notably, Saudi Arabia, which drew the ire of Osama bin Laden. Although bin Laden was not the renowned figure in 1992 as he is today, the stationing of

American troops in the holy land of Muhammed was something that he abhorred. Not only did bin Laden challenge the Saudi royal family over this issue, but it was also his first negative, interaction with the U.S. However, it would not be the Saudi billionaire's last. These events that succeeded the Iranian revolution would forever change world history. Some of the offshoots of the revolution, primarily in Afghanistan, and in the form of bin Laden and Hezbollah, continue to play an active role in global politics today. The Iranian revolution was as significant of an event that we will see for some time.

Middle East scholars agree that the Iranian revolution was a cataclysmic event and was largely unavoidable. While either of those statements is hard to rebuke, it was an event that could have not had such a long lasting, negative affect on the world. Had Mohammed Reza had more success, his son, Reza Cyrus, may have had the chance to succeed his father and continue the legacy of the Pahlavi dynasty. However, this was not to be. Despite his numerous attempts and hard work, the Shah was unable to keep the Persian people happy. Further, his inability to quell dissent in an appropriate manner also contributed to his demise and further opened the door for the charismatic Ayatollah Khomeini to seize his opportunity to become the leader of Iran.

One of Mohammed Reza's biggest failures was his inability to effectively maintain and continue to support the education of the Iranian people. It was not only the inability of the government to provide enough enrollment opportunities for those who were interested, but the lack of post-graduate jobs available. These two factors greatly contributed to the unrest amongst the middle class and the deterioration of Iranian society as a whole. Realizing that

these individuals could not rely on the Shah for guidance, regarding this matter, the populace began to look toward the religious establishment for assistance. Gaining a better understanding of what the Shah could have done differently may help future leaders remain in power.

While both Mohammed Reza and his father tried to curb the influence of Iran's religious establishment, they both faced their struggles. Beginning in the early 1960's, with the rise of Khomeini, the religious element began to gain a significant amount of influence, which culminated in the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to John Esposito, it was during the 1970's that the opposition to the monarchy grew and continued to manifest until its fall in 1979:

Opposition to the Shah grew throughout the 1970's, encompassing a broad spectrum of Iranian society; writers, poets, journalists, university professors and students; liberal nationalists and Marxists; secularists, traditionalists, and Islamic modernists. They shared concerns about the lack of political participation, the erosion of national autonomy, and the loss of religiocultural identity in an increasingly Westernized society. The clergy was joined by secular and Islamically oriented intelligentsia whose message was particularly influential among political thinkers and students¹⁷⁰.

The influence that the religious clergy was able to impose upon the people, concerning the social and political problems that pervaded Iran, was too much for the monarchy to endure. Despite the Shah's successes, he could not keep the clergy at bay, or their influence over the citizens of Iran. As a result, the monarchy fell and a new Islamic Republic was formed.

Some of the main issues that dominated the fears of the people were the continued reliance on the West, the aforementioned social and economic problems, and the economy

¹⁷⁰ John L. Esposito, "The Iranian Revolution: A Ten Year Perspective," in *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, ed. John L. Esposito (Miami, FL: Florida International University Press, 1990), 22.

that had grown increasingly unstable by the late 1970's. Further, the deterioration of the Shah's health played a significant role in his inability to remain in power. Growing increasingly weak as a result of his cancer, the Shah ultimately became too tired to counter the strength of Khomeini and his followers. It is also extremely important to note that despite the good intentions of the Shah, he tried to achieve too much, too soon. The amount of money that he spent on his army could have definitely been redirected to better serve the Iranian populace. However, Mohammed Reza believed, rightfully so, that he was constantly in an untenable position. Despite the assistance of the United States, the defeat of Mossadegh, and the continued pestering of the religious establishment, Mohammed Reza always felt as if he was on the verge of being overthrown. While the Pahlavi's accomplished many positive things in their 54 year reign, one could argue that their time on the throne had run its course. Given the length of their rule, and the continued problems that Mohammed Reza faced, it was in fact time for a change. The 54 years that the Pahlavi's were able to stay on the throne was a remarkable feat, especially in this ever-changing world. In the end, the successes of the Shah were not able to save the monarchy, but interestingly enough led to his fall from power:

For the Shah, the December 1973 price increase had been his great victory, and very much a personal one. From then on, he saw his moment and opportunity—the prospect of seemingly endless revenues, provided as if by divine intervention, to fulfill his ambitions to create what he called Iran's Great Civilization, and...solve Iran's mounting domestic economic problems. 'One of the only things my husband likes in life,' said the Empress in the mid-1970's, 'is flying, driving, driving boats—speed!' The Shah applied his passion for speed to his entire country in an attempt to hurtle Iran into the twenty-first century. In doing so, he would ignore the agitation and disorientation that such rapidity caused, as well as the resentment and unhappiness among the many who did not share his obsession with modernity. Iran, the Shah proclaimed, would become the world's fifth largest industrial power; it would be a new West Germany a

second Japan. 'It will be one of the *serious* countries in the world,' he boasted. 'Everything you can dream of can be achieved here'¹⁷¹.

¹⁷¹ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize*, 637.

Appendix A

Treaty of Alliance: Britain and the USSR and Iran 29 January 1942 (Tripartite Agreement)

Courtesy: Hurewitz Vol. 2 1956, 233-234.

Art. 1. His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (hereinafter referred to as the Allied Powers) jointly and severally undertake to respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Iran.

Art. 2. An alliance is established between the Allied Powers on the one hand and His Imperial Majesty The Shahinshah of Iran on the other.

Art. 3. (i) The Allied Powers jointly and severally undertake to defend Iran by all means at their command from all aggression on the part of Germany or any other Power.

(ii). His Imperial Majesty The Shahinshah undertakes—

- (a) to co-operate with the Allied Powers with all the means at his command and in every way possible, in order that they may be able to fulfil (sic) the above undertaking. The assistance of the Iranian forces shall, however, be limited to the maintenance of internal security on Iranian territory;
- (b) to secure to the Allied Powers, for the passage of troops or supplies from one Allied Power to the other or for other similar purposes, the unrestricted right to use, maintain, guard and, in case of military necessity, control in any way that they may require all means of communication throughout Iran, including railways, roads,

- rivers, aerodromes, ports, pipelines and telephone, telegraph and wireless installations;
- (c) to furnish all possible assistance and facilities in obtaining material and recruiting labour for the purpose of the maintenance and improvement of the means of communication referred to in paragraph (b);
- (d) to establish and maintain, in collaboration with the Allied Powers, such measures of censorship control as they may require for all the means of communication referred to in paragraph (b).
- (iii) It is clearly understood that in the application of paragraph (ii) (b) (c) and (d) of the present article the Allied Powers will give full consideration to the essential needs of Iran.

Art. 4. (i) The Allied Powers may maintain in Iranian territory land, sea and air forces in such number as they consider necessary. The location of such forces shall be decided in agreement with the Iranian Government so long as the strategic situation allows. All questions concerning relation between the forces of the Allied Powers and the Iranian authorities in such a way as to safeguard the security of the said forces. It is understood that the presence of these forces on Iranian territory does not constitute a military occupation and will disturb as little as possible the administration and the security forces of Iran, the economic life of the country, the normal movements of the population and the application of Iranian laws and regulations.

(ii) A separate agreement or agreements shall be concluded as soon as possible after the entry into force of the present Treaty regarding any financial obligations to be borne by the Allied Powers under the provisions of the present article and of paragraphs (ii) (b), (c) and (d) of Article 3 above in such matters as local purchases, the hiring of buildings and plant, the employment of labour (sic), transport charges, &c. A special agreement shall be concluded between the Allied Government and the Iranian Government defining the conditions for any transfers to the Iranian Government after the war of buildings and other improvements effected by the Allied Powers on Iranian territory. These agreements shall also settle the immunities to be enjoyed by the forces of the Allied Powers in Iran.

Art. 5. The forces of the Allied Powers shall be withdrawn from Iranian territory not later than six months after all hostilities between the Allied Powers and Germany and her associates have been suspended by the conclusion of an armistice or armistices (sic), or on the conclusion of peace between them, whichever date is the earlier. The expression “associates” of Germany means all other Powers which have engaged or may in the future engage in hostilities against either of the Allied Powers.

Art. 6 (i) The Allied Powers undertake in their relations with foreign countries not to adopt an attitude which is prejudicial to the territorial integrity, sovereignty or political independence of Iran, nor to conclude treaties inconsistent with the provisions of the present Treaty. They undertake to consult the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah in all matters affective the direct interests of Iran.

(ii) His Imperial Majesty The Shahinshah undertakes not to adopt in his relations with foreign countries an attitude which is inconsistent with the alliance, nor to conclude treaties inconsistent with the provisions of the present Treaty.

Art. 7. The Allied Powers jointly undertake to use their best endeavours (sic) to safeguard the economic existence of the Iranian people against the privations and difficulties arising as a result of the present war. On the entry into force of the present Treaty, discussions shall be opened between the Government of Iran and the Governments of the Allied Powers as to the best possible methods of carrying out the above undertaking.

Art. 8. The provisions of the present Treaty are equally binding as bilateral obligations between His Imperial Majesty The Shahinshah and each of the two other High Contracting Parties.

Art. 9. The present Treaty shall come into force on signature and shall remain in force until the date fixed for the withdrawal of the forces of the Allied Powers from Iranian territory in accordance with Article 5.

Appendix B

Percentage Increase of Students

Nursery	1,350%
Primary School	506%
Middle School	263%
Secondary School	331%
Technical and professional education	1,550%
Schools of the Literacy Corps	692%

Appendix C

Number of Students Enrolled in Higher

Education 1922 to 1963-1964

Year	Number of Students
1922	91
1933-1934	795
1943-1944	2,835
1953-1954	9,996
1963-1964	24,256

Appendix D

Iranian Educational Budget

Third Development Plan (1963-67)	45 billion rials
Fourth Development Plan (1968-72)	172 billion rials
Fifth Development Plan (1973-77)	551 billion rials

The above chart explains the amount of money in rials (\$1 is about 9,902 rials according to www.exchange-rates.org) that was designated to education in the different development plans of the White Revolution.

Appendix E

University Entrance Examinations: Number of

Examinees and Number of Percentage

Accepted, 1963-1966

Year	University	Examinees	Accepted	Percent Accepted
1963	Tehran and Affiliated	13,600	2,000	14.7
1964	Tehran and Affiliated	18,000	2,000	11.1
1965	Tehran and Affiliated	30,000	4,700	15.7
1966	Tehran and Affiliated	35,000	4,000	11.4
	Arya Mehr	5,300	500	9.4
	Teachers College	4,000	300	7.5
	Pahlavi University	7,000	500	7.1

Bibliography

PRIMARY SOURCES:

Books:

Alikhani, Alinaghi (Ed.). *The Shah and I: The Confidential Diary of Iran's Royal Court (1969-1977)*. Great Britain: I.B. Tauris & Company Limited, 1992.

Ebadi, Shirin. *Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Haas, William S. *Iran*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1946.

Hoveyda, Fereydoun. *The Fall of the Shah*. New York: Wyndham Books, 1979.

Iran. Tehran, Iran: Ministry of Information, 1971.

Millspaugh, Arthur C. *Americans in Persia*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1946.

Pahlavi, Mohammed Reza. *Mission for My Country*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961.

Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza. *Answer To History*. New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1980.

Parsons, Anthony. *The Pride and the Fall: Iran 1974-1979*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1984.

Polk, William R. *Understanding Iran: Everything You Need to Know, From Persia to The Islamic Republic, From Cyrus to Ahmadinejad*. New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2009.

Powell, E. Alexander. *By Camel And Car To The Peacock Throne*. New York: The Century Co., 1923.

Reeves, Minou. *Behind the Peacock Throne*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1986.

Roosevelt, Kermit. *Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979.

Government Documents:

Foreign Relations of the United States, Oct. 12, 1957. Vol. 12, 1955-1957, Near East: Iran; Iraq, Document 409. Accessed online 7-15-2010.

Foreign Relations of the United States, Nov. 7, 1957. Vol. 12, 1955-1957, Near East: Iran; Iraq, Document 410. Accessed online 7-15-2010.

Foreign Relations of the United States, March 25, 1966. Vol. 22, 1964-1968, Iran: Document 126. Accessed online 7-15-2010.

Interviews

Couglin, Bill. Conducted on 8-25-2010 in Lawrence, KS.

Journal Articles

Pour-Moghaddas, Ali. "Higher Education and Development in Iran." *Higher Education* 4, no. 3 (1975): 369-375.

Theses

Manafy, Abbas. *The Causes and Effects of Iranian Revolution*. Azerbaijan: Tabriz University, 1980.

SECONDARY SOURCES:

Books:

Afkhami, Gholam Reza. *The Life And Times Of The Shah*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009.

Alexander, Yonah and Allan Nanes. *The United States and Iran: A Documentary History*. Frederick, MD: Aletheia Books, 1980.

Atabaki, Touraj. *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000.

Bakhash, Shaul. "The Post-Mossedeq Era and the Shah's White Revolution." In *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz, 31-34. Washington, D.C.: United States Government as represented by the Secretary of the Army, 1989.

Berger, Morroe. "The Middle Class in the Arab World." In *The Middle East in Transition*, ed. Walter Z. Laqueur, 61-71. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1958.

- Bullard, Sir Reader. *The Camels Must Go*. London: Faber and Faber, 1961.
- Carter, Laraine Newhouse (1978). "Social Systems." *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop, 137-78. Washington, D.C.: The American University.
- Clinton, Jerome W. *The Tragedy of Sohrab and Rostam: from the Persian National Epic, The Shahname of Abol-Qasem Ferdowsi*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1987.
- Coughlin, Con. *Khomeini's Ghost: The Iranian Revolution And The Rise Of Militant Islam*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009.
- DeNovo, John. *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East: 1900-1939*. Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1963.
- Eilers, Wilhelm. "Educational and Cultural Development in Iran during the Pahlavi Era." *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski, 303-31. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.
- Elwell-Sutton, L. P. "Reza Shah the Great: Founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty." *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski, 1-50. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.
- Esposito, John L. "Iranian Revolution: A Ten Year Perspective." *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact*, ed. John L. Esposito, 17-39. Miami, FL: Florida International University Press, 1990.
- Fawcett, Louise. *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Frye, Richard N. *The Golden Age of Persia: The Arabs in The East*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1975.
- Greaves, Rose. "1942-1976: The Reign of Muhammad Riza Shah." *Twentieth-Century Iran*, 53-91. London, England: Heinemann, 1977.
- Griffith, William E. "Iran's Foreign Policy in the Pahlavi Era." *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski, 365-388. Stanfordm CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.

- Hambly, Gavin R.G. "The Pahlavi Autocracy: Riza Shah, 1921-1941." In *Cambridge History of Iran, Volume 7*, ed. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville, 213-45. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Hendershot, Clarence. *Politics, Polemics And Pedagogues: A study of United States technical assistance in education in Iran, including negotiations, political considerations in Iran and the United States, programming, methods, problems, results, and evaluation*. New York: Vantage Press, 1975.
- Hurewitz, J.C. *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record 1914-1956, Volume II*. New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1958.
- Kamrava, Mehran. *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since the First World War*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.
- Kazemzadeh, Firuz. "Ideological Crisis in Iran." In *The Middle East In Transition*, ed. Walter Laqueur, 196-203. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1958.
- Kazemzadeh, Firuz. "Soviet-Iranian Relations: A Quarter-Century of Freeze and Thaw." In *The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The Post World War II Era*, ed. Ivo J. Lederer and Wayne S. Vucinich, 55-77. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1974.
- Keddie, Nikki R. *Modern Iran: Roots And Results Of Revolution*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Kepel, Gilles. *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002.
- Lambton, Ann K.S. *Landlord And Peasant In Persia: A study Of Land Tenure And Land Revenue Administration*. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- Lambton, Ann K.S. *The Persian Land Reform 1962-1966*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.
- Lambton, Ann K.S. *Qajar Persia*. London, England: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1987.
- Lenczowski, George. *Russia and the West In Iran, 1918-1948: A Study in Big-Power Rivalry*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1949.

- Lenczowski, George. *American Presidents and the Middle East*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Lesch, David W. *1979: The Year That Shaped The Modern Middle East*. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2001.
- McMorris, David S. "Demographic Setting and Education." In *Iran: A Country Study*, ed. Richard F. Nyrop, 67-105. Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1978.
- Milani, Abbas. *Eminent Persians: The Men and Women Who Made Modern Iran, 1941-1979* (Volume 2). New York: Persian World Press, 2008.
- Mortenson, Greg and David Oliver Relin. *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.
- Mortenson, Greg. *Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace With Books, Not Bombs, In Afghanistan and Pakistan*. New York: Viking, 2009.
- Nollau, Gunther and Hans Jurgen Wiehe. *Russia's South Flank: Soviet Operations in Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963.
- Pilevsky, Philip. *I Accuse: Jimmy Carter and the Rise of Militant Islam*. Dallas, TX: Durban House Publishing Company, Inc., 2007.
- Pourkarimi, Mehdi. *Iran And The Collapse Of The Monarchy*. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1980.
- Qutb, Seyyed. *Milestones*. Damascus, Syria: Kazi Publications, 2007.
- Ramzani, Rouhollah K. *Iran's Foreign Policy 1941-1973: A Study of Foreign Policy in Modernizing Nations*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1975.
- Samii, Abdol Hussein, M. Reza Vaghefi, Dariush Nowrasteh. *Systems of Higher Education: Iran*. New York: Interbook, 1978.

- Savory, Roger M. "Social Development in Iran during the Pahlavi Era." In *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, ed. George Lenczowski, 85-127. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.
- Thomas, Lewis V. and Richard N. Frye. *The United States and Turkey and Iran*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951.
- Wilber, Donald N. *Iran: Past and Present*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958.
- Wilber, Donald N. *Riza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran*. Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1975.
- Wilber, Donald N. *Iran Past and Present: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Wright, Denis. *The English Amongst the Persians: During the Qajar Period 1787-1921*. London: Heinmann, 1977.
- Wright, Denis. *The Persians Amongst The English: Episodes in Anglo-Persian History*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 1985.
- Yapp, M.E. *The Near East Since the First World War: A History to 1995 (Second Edition)*. Harlow, England: Longman, an imprint of Pearson Education, 1996.
- Yergin, Daniel. *The Prize: The Epic Quest For Oil, Money, And Power*. New York: Free Press, 1991.
- Zabih, Sepehr. *The Mossadegh Era: Roots of the Iranian Revolution*. Chicago, IL: Lake View Press, 1982.

Conference Papers

- Rose L. Greaves, 2001. "Iran's Pivotal Role in East-West Relations During World War II." Paper given in Tehran, Iran at International Conference on World War II.

Journal Articles:

- Amini, Parvin Merat. "A Single Party State in Iran, 1975-78: The Rastakhiz Party – the Final Attempt by the Shah to Consolidate his Political Power Base." *Middle Eastern Studies* 38, No. 1 (January 2002), 131-168.
- Ashraf, Ahmad and Ali Banuazizi. "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution." *State, Culture, and Society* 1, No. 3 (Spring 1985), 3-40.
- Bill, James A. "The Politics of Student Alienation: The Case of Iran". *Iranian Studies* 2, No. 1 (Winter, 1969), 8-26.
- Bill, James A. "Iran and the Crisis of '78." *Foreign Affairs* 57, No. 2 (Winter, 1978), 323-342.
- Green, Jerrold D. "Pseudoparticipation and Countermobilization: Roots of the Iranian Revolution." *Iranian Studies* 13, No. 1-4 (1980), 31-53.
- Greaves, Rose L. (?). "Iran's Pivotal Role in East-West Relations During World War II". Pp. 1-9.
- Harris, Ben M. "'Literacy Corps' Iran's Gamble to Conquer Illiteracy." *International Review of Education* 9, No. 4 (1963-1964), 430-437.
- Henkoff, Ronald. "Do Oil and Education Mix?: The Middle East Connection". *Change* 9, No. 6 (1977), 25-29.
- Jasse, Richard L. "The Baghdad Pact: Cold War or Colonialism?" *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, Issue 1 (1991), 140-156.
- Kazemi, Farhad. "Urban Migrants and the Revolution." *Iranian Studies* 13, No. 1-4 (1980), 257-277.
- Kazemzadeh, Firuz. "The Origin and Early Development of the Persian Cossack Brigade." *American Slavic and East European Review* 15, No. 3 (October 1956), 351-363.
- Makdisi, Ussama. "'Anti-Americanism' in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History." *The Journal of American History* 89, No. 2 (2002), 538-557.
- Samii, A. William. "The Nation and Its Minorities: Ethnicity, Unity and State Policy in Iran."

Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 20, No. 1&2, (2000), 128-138.

Zonis, Marvin. "Educational Ambivalence in Iran." *Iranian Studies* 1, No. 4 (1968), 133-153.

Websites

Iranmap.com. Available from:

<http://www.iranmap.com/maps-of-iran>. Internet; Accessed 13 December, 2010.

Forums.altnews.com.aucommons.wikimedia.org. Available from Google Images;

http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://farm1.static.flickr.com/145/4295007156766147071.jpg%3Fv%3D0&imgrefurl=http://forums.altnews.com.au/blogs/paul-bakker/loveanimal&usg=__f4alfflj1ZA8U77ewW_SLiigFPE=&h=500&w=364&sz=225&hl=en&start=5&zoom=1&tbnid=VxBHtioyl7asIM:&tbnh=112&tbnw=87&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dpeacock%2Bthrone%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26rlz%3D1G1TSND_ENUS406%26biw%3D817%26bih%3D354%26tbs%3Disch:10%2C328&um=1&itbs=1&iact=hc&vpx=208&vpy=30&dur=2980&hovh=263&hovw=191&tx=121&ty=215&ei=_Uz1TM3OF4nLnAfTx92QCg&oei=90z1TITfAsKqIAf5tfnXBQ&esq=2&page=2&ndsp=10&ved=1t:429,r:1,s:5&biw=817&bih=354. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Worldmapsonline.com. Available from:

http://www.worldmapsonline.com/persian_empire.htm. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Commons.wikimedia.org. Available from:

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mohamad_Reza_Shah_Pahlavi_in_hospital_149_jpeg.jpg. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Ivmp.wordpress.com Available from: <http://ivmp.wordpress.com/category/history/after-Islam-contemporary/pahlavi-dynasty/>. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Famous-relationships.topsynergy.com. Available from:

http://famous-relationships.topsyenergy.com/Ayatollah_Khomeini/. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Iranchamber.com. Available from:

<http://www.iranchamber.com/history/pahlavi/pahlavi.php>.

Internet; Accessed 11 December 2010.

Dcr.csusb.edu. Available from:

<http://dcr.csusb.edu/dny/br-russzones.jpg>. Internet; Accessed 30 November 2010.

Iransportspress.com. Available from:

<http://www.iransportspress.com/forums/showthread.php?p=175933>. Internet;

Accessed 30 November 2010.